**January 3, 1932**

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen, I greet you with the words: Praised be Jesus Christ!

The whole future of Polish emigrants in the United States depends upon the generation which is now coming of age, on our children and our young people. Our children are an inestimable treasure, whose power, might and strength is such as to provoke admiration, uncontrollable ire or even terror among people of other nationalities! They not only foresee, but even are convinced of the fact that within a dozen years or so these young Americans of Polish descent, thanks to their natural gifts and seasoned by their rough start in life, will take over leading positions in American society. – Unfortunately, among our young people, especially since the time of the World War, one notices certain alarming and distressing behaviors. Diverse men and women give reasons, prescribe cures, and that’s where it all ends. Not only insolence is more and more pervasive in the ranks of our young people, but also these young people in practice make claims which they do not have a right to, either from God or from nature; they refuse to be obedient to their virtuous father and loving mother; all of this they justify by education, progress, equal rights and liberty, all of which ends in moral breakdowns and in death. These young people, who are just starting to live, whom the world is smiling down upon, who could live long years in happiness and do good, stand in courts – sit in correctional institutions – suffer in prisons. Many a young person at this moment sits in a cell behind bars and sees before him the gallows – the electric chair – counts the days and even the hours until his life will be over - when his body will be put into a coffin and let down into a cold grave! Many a father, and many a mother today evening will shed tears tinged with blood, because their wicked son or uncaring daughter, giving in to the provocation of perverse comrades, took no heed of parental advice and was lost, body and soul, to both earthly and eternal life! Many a young man and many a young woman today sigh and moan, cry and complain, feel sorry for themselves and are sorry for what they did – too late! The world has no pity for such as these, has no comfort to give them! The world won’t even look at these betrayed victims, covered in wounds, hurting, destroyed and crushed morally and physically! The world and people will take advantage, make fun of and reject these people! And then what kind of existence, what kind of life will they lead? Today evening, let us look at certain relations present among our young people, what are the reasons behind and the cures for the reigning evil!

**Our Young People**

Generally speaking our young people are the healthiest and noblest in America. Thank God. These young people love God, respect their parents, love their siblings and do not despise their neighbors. These young people are pious, hard-working and sober. They should be praised for this! But the ranks of these well-disciplined young people are growing looser – are being broken and falling apart! Proof of this statement is furnished by Detroit newspapers from Monday, December 7th, 1931. ”A sad and painful thing has happened, which has profoundly touched the inhabitants of our town, and most of all the Polish population. Four minors, find themselves today in the hands of the judicial authorities responsible for juvenile delinquents. These boys of Polish descent are accused of the murder of their 15-year old playmate, Józef Przystaś. Those accused of murder are – Stanisław Orliński, aged 14; Józef Sawicki, aged 14; Antoni Mazur, aged 13, and Longin Jędrzejewski, aged 11. According to what they themselves say, the boys formed a club of which all of them were members. Józef Przystaś supposedly made fun of the youngest, Longin Jędrzejewski, so the other members decided to stand behind him and punish Przystaś, which they did on Sunday morning, shooting at Przystaś as he went to the basement to bring up coal. The boys claim they had no intention of wounding Przystaś, even less of killing him; they simply wanted to frighten him. This statement is confirmed by the fact which the chief of police Johnson drew attention to, namely that Orliński aimed at a metal coal bucket which the boy held in his hand. The boys are currently in a correctional institution. The young murderers will probably be sent to an industrial school in Lansing, Michigan, where they would stay until their 18th birthday, when they can be accused of homicide or murder. The mother of the killed boy, as well as the mothers of the young murderers cannot eat or sleep, but weep, faint and go into hysterics! However, they can’t bring the poor victim back to life.”

The New York newspapers from Monday, December 7th, 1931 (from about a month ago), wrote about the following event, under the title:

“Father commits suicide, because he is unwanted at home.”

“New York, Monday, December 7th. – Before their sixth child was born to the Kukowski family last June, their 16-year old daughter Helena ran away from home. She thought she had too little freedom and that her father expected too much of her. The Kukowski family then lived at 7 McDougal Street, Brooklyn NY, and was very poor. The runaway gave no sign of life until December 7th of this year, when she wrote to her mother from Flushing, L.I., a letter in which we can read the following words: “I am happy and I’m working. Father doesn’t understand me. He is old-fashioned and has old-country views. I won’t be home for Christmas, and I won’t come back, unless father leaves home or dies.” Kukowska read this letter to her husband, who slipped into a pensive mood on hearing the inappropriate and unjust accusations of his reckless daughter, and finally said: “It seems to me, that you, even after all of this, still love her!” The mother, like a true mother, was guided more by her heart than her reason and began to accuse the poor man of sternness and harshness! Distressed, he remained silent! Last Wednesday, Kukowski, before leaving for work, affectionately hugged his wife, kissed his children, and as a farewell said to his wife: “Don’t worry, mother! I have a feeling that Helena misses her home and will come back home for Christmas,” and he left the house. He went into the city, rented a furnished room at 413 6th Street, Brooklyn NY and, not wanting to be in the way of his daughter, he committed suicide by gas poisoning! When the door was forced open – all they found was a dead body. His burial expenses were covered by the city. Now the daughter can very well return safely to her home and spend the holidays with her mother, because the father didn’t want to be in their way.”

Not long ago, in Sing Sing, a young American of Polish descent was executed on the electric chair. He had started with small burglaries and finished with murder. This arrogant man claimed he didn’t believe in anything, in God or in eternity. “Don’t talk to me about God, I lived like an animal and I will die like an animal. I don’t care about anything.” When his aged mother was mentioned, he replied scornfully: “I don’t care about my mother; and I don’t want to see her.” When the electric current was turned on, he started to curse and left this world with profanity on his lips!

I have before me a letter from a certain Polish girl who is now at the Good Shepherd Home [Dom Dobrego Pasterza.] Listen girls to what this poor girl writes: “Dear Father Justin! I write these words on my knees, and at the same time tears of pain and despair flow down my cheeks. Now I see and feel that I was wrong when instead of listening to the entreaties of my mother, I listened to my friends! It is true that I worked, I worked everyday, but at the same time each evening I went out to dance and have fun. Today I am here! All day and night long I regret my life and I cry; please help me, Father, and I promise that when I return home, I will spend my evenings at home with my mother!”

A few years ago, Franciszka Polejewska came to Chicago. She spent her time at dances and parties. About a year ago she met Max Hauck, an American of Jewish descent, and shortly afterwards married him. As quickly as they had been married, they were soon parted. After a week of living together, Hauck left for the unknown and Polejewska, in accordance with American customs, made sure to get a civil divorce. Evidently however she was hot-headed, as soon afterward she got engaged to Bolesław Kaczmarek, but here too there were differences and misunderstandings, until one night, the irate fiancé came to her apartment, and after a long and fierce argument, he shot Polejewska and finally shot himself in the head. And so this young Polish man and young Polish women miserably left this world, where they could have worked usefully and lived long.

Here in Buffalo, a few days ago, we had the following incident. In a municipal court, before Judge Weiss, stood a young Polish man, accused of beating and kicking his eighty-year old father who had dared to reproach him for coming home drunk each evening. The judge sentenced the heartless son to a 100-days’ imprisonment. Before giving the sentence he said: “I have no words to describe such a being as you. Even an animal would probably be ashamed of such behavior.” …

About three months ago, I received a letter of the following content: “Reverend Father, please explain to other bachelors why Polish girls marry not only men of other nationalities, but even blacks, even when Polish bachelors are 90-percent good. Polish bachelors, however, cannot give girls “high-priced automobiles” or “a roll of bills” for night cabarets. I’m a musician; I’m 35 years old; I don’t drink or smoke, but it looks like I’ll have to go to Poland to find myself a wife. Two weeks ago I played at a wedding reception in the black section of town; the groom was a black gambler from Michigan Street, the bride, a stately Polish girl from the East Side. When I asked her why she was marrying a black, she replied: “Money is everything now-a-days!” It’s scary to witness what our girls are up to!”

And for my part I will add that similar events tug at one’s heartstrings and bring tears to one’s eyes!

Let us let the curtain fall over these and other sad images from the life of our young people, and let us ask: who is to blame for this? And I will answer immediately, concisely and distinctly. Parents – schools and the educational system - theaters – newspapers and the prohibition are to blame!

The parents are to blame. The child is born in a hospital; he is brought up on the street and in school; young people spend their time in factories; they enjoy themselves at dance halls and theaters; they eat in hotels and restaurants; they die in hospitals and institutions; they are buried by funeral parlors. And what happened to their home? It disappeared, it’s gone, it turned into some unnatural thing. Young people come home from work in the evening, barely do they have enough time to gulp down their supper, and then they hurry to the theater, to a dance or a card party, they return home late at night or early in the morning only to sleep at home a few hours and then again to the factory! This is not home. Where are the real homes, old-fashioned, where the father sat in the evenings with a newspaper in hand – the mother sat darning, the daughters embroidered, the elder son read books, and younger children did their homework. When the clock struck ten, the family said prayers and went to sleep. Today after supper, the head of the family rushes upstairs to the attic or down to the basement, or to the woodshed where his most precious treasure is, a pot to make “moonshine” or “home-brew.” The mother gets herself up in the newest fashion and runs to a “shower party” – “stork party” – “birthday party” – or at least a “card party”. Small children are left at home and without the watchful eye of the father or mother on them, they wander the streets until eleven or even later. The older daughter also needs some entertainment, so evening after evening if she doesn’t go to the theater, than to dances and parties; and the sons? They spend hours standing on street corners, showering passing girls and maidens with dirty phrases or harass them with inappropriate comments; or they spend whole evenings in pool-rooms or other suspicious places! In today’s houses only Rex and Kitty find a home! The children are brought up on the streets – in dance halls and in cabarets. The father does not care for them, and the mother doesn’t have enough time to look after the kids. Give us back our virtuous fathers and beloved mothers, who didn’t let their children out of their sight!

There is another strange type of parents! These parents in turn worship their kids so much that they not only dance to their tune, but are ready to frame their darling son or daughter in gold, light at least four candles before them and bow down before them. I know such families where the 12-year old son kicked and beat his mother, and the 14-year old daughter slapped her father’s face and spit on him! What a deserved punishment for so unthinkingly worshipping children! And now I ask – who is frequently to blame for the bad situation of our young people? The home, the father and the mother!

Next, institutes of both primary and secondary education are to blame, as they give only intellectual education and exclude moral education, that is, Godly education. They care only for the mind and memory, and neglect the soul. Not long ago, the desperate father of an 18-year old university student, who had killed herself, accused her professor, a declared atheist, in court of causing the young girl’s suicide. “This professor,” said her father “is really the murderer of my daughter. The doctrines which he instilled in her sensitive mind killed her. These doctrines destroyed her faith in God, her religious feeling; these doctrines shattered her ideas of morality and modesty – and all of this ruined her health and her mind. My beloved daughter took her own life because of his teachings and doctrines.” This poor father was right! In schools, at whatever level, there are teachers who preach perverse doctrines. They profess distorted views of reason, the free will and the conscience; they make fun of God and his laws; they mock morality and the soul’s immortality; the dignity of rational man is to them equal to that of irrational animals; for them death is the end of everything; their god is not only using but overindulging in God’s gifts. It is not strange then, that young people come out from such schools with something lacking, with evident deficiencies in morality and honesty; with cynical smiles, they sneer at natural laws and the laws of God and live callously, only for money and ready for any lawlessness? – Thirdly, theaters are also to blame, especially those which in moving images present as heroes: marauders, robbers, bandits, bootleggers, divorcees; they show scenes of palace life, of the life of millionaires and rich men; comparing them to the life of the poor and destitute; they ignite young imaginations and incite them against God’s law and natural law!

Various magazines and newspapers are also to blame, as they chase sensations and under cover of raising readers’ awareness, in the name of education, they poison the minds of children and young people – in the name of freedom, they imbue the rules of decadence. They devote a lot of space to describing scandalous divorces – murders – killings – and the like!

And finally, the Honorable Lady Prohibition, I must admit that she too is to blame in regard to young people. She gladly took young people under her protective wings and brings them up truly with little regard for their good! Earlier, young Polish men and women were ashamed to touch a drop of vodka, today they drink bottle after bottle of stinking moonshine and are proud of this fact and vaunt it! It’s a shame!

These are the most important reasons why our young people are not like we would like them to be, and not like they should be! Where is the cure for this? In the home – in parents – in the theater – in newspapers – and in sobriety! The home must be built on Christian foundations, and parents must bring up their children according to Christ’s principles, in the name of Jesus; theaters and newspapers must remember the commandment, given amid lightning and thunder on Mount Sinai: Thou shall not kill! And authorities should help by nixing, once and for all, the laws which open wide the gates of iniquity to our young people. Otherwise it will get progressively worse, and future generations, instead of blessing us, will curse us!