March 11, 1945

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

The theme of today’s talk is derived from a letter having to do with the theme. Please listen: “I never expected that I would have to complain of any of my children. However, in my old age, I have changed my view of the matter. We have six children; five sons and one daughter. Our daughter married in 1942. She found a decent man. He worked and was very good to her. A year later, the Lord blessed them with a child; he was healthy a well behaved. My son-in-law worked and brought home a good paycheck. In 1944 he was conscripted to the army. It was then that my daughter cried and carried on. In September he left by ship and today he is somewhere on the front. Not long after he left, my daughter said that she needs to go to work, in order to do something for the country and to earn some money for the future because nowadays the pay is good. At the beginning, I criticized her for that. I explained that as a priority she should think about her child who is more worth than the money. She would not permit herself to be convinced. “After all, Mom, you could manage to take care of the child for a few house,” she maintained. What irritated me more was that she began to go out more often from home. Every evening, when the child went to sleep, she dressed her best and quietly left home. She explained that she is going out with her girlfriends to the theater. After a month of this kind of activity, she went to work. I thought that after working all day, she would be too tired to go out and spend some time with her child. But that didn’t happen. At the factory she met a man who was not Polish. He had a wife and two children. He drove her to work daily. He brought her from work and in the evening they would go out for a good time. She neglected her child more and more and forgot about her husband. I again reminded her that she is not only a wife but also a mother, and that she has obligations toward her husband and she does to her child. She got angry with me. Took off her wedding ring and threw it in a corner and said, “This is what I care about it all. Mother, leave me in pace. I am not a child and don’t need to be told what I am free or not free to do.” And what is worse? She writes more infrequently to her husband and she is not truthful with him. Currently she works afternoon and evening hours. I don’t know how this all will end. She stopped going to Sunday Mass. At home she mutters something from anger and talks to herself. When I think about her husband who is too far from us, and that he thinks that all is the same when he left, I shake with fear. I ask you, Fr. Justin, to talk to these types of daughters, wives and mothers. Perhaps one or the other will come to her senses before the whole family is broken up. Now to our talk entitled:

“SABOTEURS ON THE HOME FRONT”

In order to assure you that in these days there are things going on that are unbelievable and foretell not much good but a great deal of evil, I will add the contents of a few letters. Here’s one: “My son left from our home from a small town in Pennsylvania to Buffalo! He did so because he maintained that he could get a better paying job. I paid some of his travel but several dollars for living expenses. When he left, he disappeared. I waited ten months before I heard from him. At long last he not only told me about his job but about a woman also. He married but he did not give me his address. Six months later, he wrote again. This time he said that he not only had a job but a woman and a child as well. This really disturbed me. Even though I am no longer young, I went to Buffalo. I wandered through the Polish area all day, asking, seeking and had no luck. After a second week of searching, no luck. Then on the third day in the afternoon, on one of the side streets, a woman told me of a family living on such and such a street. I went there. I found my sun and ostensibly his wife. The house was filthy. Clothes and dishes were everywhere. A crib was by the table. A woman was at the stove. A bottle was on the table. My son was so drunk that he didn’t even recognize me. I told him to get sober and that tomorrow I would take him back to Pennsylvania. I told him I would want an explanation for what happened. I left. I came back the next day to take him and bring him to his senses. He admitted that he never got married and just cohabitate. They didn’t get married because they couldn’t since she already had a husband. He was somewhere in England and she was going to get a divorce. The met at work. They went for an occasional beer to a restaurant. So they began to live together. I started to criticize him for his actions. He listened but did not say anything. His wife jumped up and started yelling at me and cursing. She accused me of steeling my son and breaking up her happiness. I told her that she was a house breaker because she has no faith. That made her angrier. “What if I wish to live the way I live?” She yelled and told me to go home. On parting, I told my son: “from this moment on you stop being my son and me your mother.” I left. I drove home and I thought that I did right.

 Here again, a circumstance: “I have three sons. Two are married. One is somewhere in Germany, another in the Pacific. The third, youngest, twenty-year old is still at home. He works in a factory where they make plane parts. He earns sixty dollars a week. We have little consolation with this young one. He keeps 25 dollars for himself which he wastes. A 25 year old lady, not Polish, and with two children hooked up with him. Her husband is in the Marine Corp for several years now. We can’t complain that our son is not working. His response is “We love each other.” He goes with her after work before he comes home. They go to a tavern, where they have floor shows, and then he takes her home. We warned him not to go out like he does with a married woman and if not, he has to leave home. We await his decision.”

 Or take this letter from a soldier on the front: “I don’t know what to do. I serve now for two years. I am on the front how already 12 months. Before I was called to military service, I was going out with a girl for about a year. I gave her an engagement ring. She promised me that she would wait until I came back. A week ago I received the last letter which made me very sad. She let me know that she was going out with a widower who drives her to work. The letter crushed my heart. Up until now I was happy in the thought that when I return from this hellish war, I will make my own family and live in peace. I now have nothing to return to. True, I am not the only one finding myself in these circumstances. The same thing happened to some of my buddies. What is worse, they told me that their wives divorced them. A grave injustice has been done to my buddies. While we fight for them and for our country, the steal our wives and intended.

 One more letter – from one of the chaplains. –“I ask a favor for one of my soldiers. The poor guy received sad information, and drove him to despair. His intended wrote to him that she is breaking the engagement, because she found another with whom she fell in love. The poor chap is devastated. Father, please communicate with this girl and take the soldiers part. I cannot help because the women will not respond to my letters.”

 I really wanted to help out. I wrote once and then again. I received no reply. But such things do not discourage me. I thought to myself: “The mountain did not come to Mohamad so Mohamed will go to the mountain.” I went myself twice. I did not succeed. Despite rapping on three of the doors to the house, and tapping at the windows, I got no answer. Evidently I was seen through the window and they thought I would give up. I went a third time; this time in the evening. I rap on the front door. After a long while, some man opened the door. I thought perhaps he was the father of the family. I guessed wrong. I spoke to the gentleman in Polish that I wished to see so and so. He answered: “sorry but I don’t understand you! – Ultimately he opens the door to let me in. There, by the table is a girl smoking a cigarette. On the table is a tray with two glasses. Under the table – a bottle. She sits stiffly. I stand stiffly. I say in Polish, “I came in the interest of an engaged service man.” She replies in English, “I am not at all surprised!” I ask her to tell me about her separating herself from her intended. She says, “Well, I was simply tired of waiting for his return. When I saw how those married women and single girls carry on and have fun, I simply asked myself why I shouldn’t follow the gang. Why shouldn’t I get some fun out of life? I work hard, don’t I? Hence I am entitled to a good time.” I began to explain. Suddenly she impatiently interrupted me, with these clipped words? “I’ve heard that one before and I’m fed up of it! I have a right to lead my own life and intend to do just so.” It was not worth continuing to talk to the infuriated parrot. I left. I noticed that in the kitchen, sat the elderly man who opened the door for me. He was looking at me with an angry sneer which indicated victory. – Luckily not far from this house, I met a woman known to me for several years. She was curious about what I was doing in the area? I told her I was at such and such a house under this address and had some business there. She said, “Father, this woman is a gadabout. Four evenings in the week a foreman of the shop where she works comes for her. He is married and has three children. On those evenings when he comes for her, the parents leave the home, because the daughter does not want to be disturbed by them”. Some parents! Exemplary parents. Is that not true!!!

 We hear so much these day about sabotage and saboteurs. Especially in countries devastated with armed power of the enemy. Sabotage is done by the underground in occupied countries, but also by workers in work camps. Sabotage is the main work of spies. They blow up railway tracks, factories, military equipment, office and military barracks, ships, etc., They do the job of destroying property, goods, and human life, and mostly war materials in order to defeat the enemy. That is why they destroy enemy property but inflict fear and anxiety. The authorities seek out saboteurs and punish them severely. The saboteur is usually punished with execution. Here in the home front there is no lack of saboteurs. I do not have in mind those who do material harm, as in military efforts, or sluggards; I do not mean those who in commercial efforts inflict harm as in the black market, or those who travel because they have the money to do so. I do not mean egoists or those who love themselves only. I specifically think of those Don Juans who steal the wives of our soldiers and the engaged to our soldiers! Those are truly moral saboteurs on the home front. Someone once wrote: “There is a brand of saboteurs who are not paid attention to, a person not in uniform because he is physically incapable or in helping the war effort. That kind of saboteur does little but gabs a lot. He complains about long hours of work with little pay but more than his father, grandfather or great grandfather earned. Despite the fact that he makes more in three days than a private makes in a month. For work on a Saturday, he earns pay and a half and on Sunday doubles pay. He dresses elegantly modern. He has plenty for recreation and relaxation. He lives thousands of miles from the war’s front, from the mud and the ugliness and understands nothing of hunger, desire, meaning of life. He, this hero, drinks the best of beer and whiskey whenever he wishes. He is angry when his table does not have the best steak and the best prepared food. He does not think of the millions who haven’t changed clothes in a week, who are unshaven, unwashed, who slowly rot from uncleanliness in the noise and roar of armaments. He is far away from the distasteful men who suffer. He is far away from wounding and death. He is far from the doubtfulness of surviving from second to second. Among the patriotic and noted workers, you will find those who hunt the wives and engaged belonging to men who fight for freedom, our way of life, in defense of faith in God and our nation. He, after his daily work, seeks as his duty to get in the way of the soldiers wife or intended. This patriotic Don Juan seeks zeroes in on naïve women, the weak, the impressionable the enervated who are far away from their soldier-men.

 But nothing less are some women. The wife of a husband-soldier has no excuse for seeking outside entertainments which alienate them from their husbands or their intended at war. If they truly love their husband-soldiers whom they solemnly married publicly and taken the oath they will avoid Romeos who will lure them away. Their excuse of loneliness, which in current time, a way to obscure their ugliness when their men fight for them. Free time can be spent in more profitable and good ways. “And there should be more time for prayer and less for the tavern-bar!” I do not exaggerate when I say that such saboteurs out to be ashamed of such activity. Nevertheless, such saboteurs will get angry if someone dares to accuse them of immorality of their situation. If they would stop for a while and consider their lowering and irrational rashness and escape from memory, and the unjust, insincere behavior in regard to the husbands and intendeds in the military service who left what was so valuable to them to open themselves to sacrifice all because of their love. They should cease their activity, even though they need to suffer by it at take up the noble life. Up until now, the home front has suffered the most from saboteurs who without regard to his or her obligations and the rights of hers, spread moral devastation in the order of home and family life. Not too long ago a certain American correspondent wrote there is no more lower entity than the wife of a soldier who in the absence of her husband deliberately alienates herself from him. It holds even more for the man who conspires with the soldier’s wife.

 Some weeks ago, I read about a certain marital tragedy. Two years ago the government called a husband and father to military service. He was just short of his 23rd birthday. His young wife was despondent. After he had left she sought out work for herself. She left her children in the protection of her mother. She let go of the notion that she herself was mainly responsible for their well-being. When he returned home, on a three-day leave, he protested too but without effect. He was soon after moved to the front. She was always on the run. She had forgotten that she was a wife and a mother. She found herself a foreman. She knew well that he also was a father of three grown children. Despite the fact that he was 55 years old and she barely 23, they had one common vice, to survive. And survive they did. In about three months, the news came that her husband-soldier lost his right eye and right hand in a battle, somewhere in the Reich. What did this saboteur do? That what one would expect. She asked for a divorce from her husband. The reason: the wounding of her husband. And she received the divorce. A few days later, she just disappeared without trace. Her 55 yr. old companion also disappeared. What will happen to her crippled husband when he comes home from the hospital? A desert! He will remain without a wife, without children, without a home. So this is what he fought for and lost his eye and arm for, and depended on for the rest of his life.

 In the Book of Prophecies we read a couple meaningful sentences: *“And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart. (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart.*

 *(She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:*

*Now is she without, now in the streets, and lite in wait at every corner.)*

*So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,*

*I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.*

*Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.*

*I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.*

*I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*

*Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.*

*For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey:*

*He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.*

*With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.*

*He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;*

*Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

*Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.*

*Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.*

*For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her.*

*Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”*

Some ascribethe reasons for breaking of an engagement or the breaking of the marriage oath for varied reasons: loneliness, homesickness, nervous breakdown etc. However there is one reason and one cause, namely: the changing of traditions, which some called free love in marriage and after marriage. How many years has the media found virtue, sincerity, and marital fidelity on a low plane. After all, free love, they said is beautiful and a boon. And in their naiveté, they believed it. And what are they finding out: Disease, sickness, unhappiness. Over and above all it is a lowering of human nature because it drags it down to the level of the savage beast. Up until now the cause of this lowering was the man. The women in our time want equality on the playing field. The press relates more than one family tragedy. A certain judge, James C. Connell, maintains that in many instances the breakup of the marriage is due to the wife being unfaithful during war time. I dare say, the judge continues, that men take it out on faithless wives. It leads to many murders, because the soldiers have lacked the quality of forgiveness. Already men come to me and ask for a divorce, because of the length of military service away from home, their wives had children by other men and the soldiers could not forgive them. And such find other ways to resolve the problem.

 And it is corroborated even in pre-war marriages. Someone wrote: “Today wives are seen behaving badly in factories with men; they are seen in taverns, in the company of suspicious characters and questionable places. Under the influence of alcohol, they often forget about their husbands and about the virtuous life. They don’t even pay attention to their surroundings. They know well that such things may become tolerable. When their men return from war, they know that what they are doing is wrong.”

 Not too long ago I read appeal of the certain bureau in Washington which declared that wives wishing to get a divorce from their men, that the plots and the faithlessness of war wives contribute to the demoralization of the spirit of soldiers and seamen. In the seventh army it is claimed that five soldiers get info from their wives who want a divorce or that they are running around with other men. Similarly the same thing is happening on the Pacific, according to Margaret Hagan, who spent six months as a representative of the Red Cross. She saw how the soldiers, after receiving letters from their wives, their intended, or their parents, they showed not only disappointment but despair. Occasionally, even neighbors would write, “It seems to me that you should know about this.” And they would write rumors about the suspicious activity of their wives or intended, sometimes even written in anger. When a soldier receives such a letter, it makes his fellow soldiers think about the possibilities of their wives or intended are doing similar things. Seeking divorces happen not only to those in young marriages but those for example, who have been married for 15 years and already had children. What generally is the thought of soldiers about returning home after the war? They wish to live as they had left, with family and loved ones. At the same time, those they left behind are drinking and breaking their oat of faithfulness. They are playing while the soldiers are fighting a bloody war.

 World history teaches us that the health of a nation depends on the health of the families which constitute that nation. With the destruction of families, nations are lost. Those who have experienced life maintain that the state of the woman is the state of the nation. Therefore, logically, the noble life of the family blossoms where women are dedicated and faithful to their state of life. It holds for wives and for those women engaged. In 1935, a book was published with the title, “Deliverance from under the Spell of Jesus.” It was written by a German lady, a relation of one of the German generals. On the title page is a large and heavy cross. Before the cross process men and women wearing chains. The author wanted to communicate that the cross took away the freedom and the joy of life. The German author wishes to liberate people from this oppression. Take a look at this German generation. This horde of animals, these arch-people of the Arian race. I thus turn your attention to the saboteurs on the home front. May they know what awaits them unless they turn toward the cross and live the life of the Crucified!