

December 1935

Why Maternity Guilds?

Catholic Physicians' Guild

Follow this and additional works at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq>

Recommended Citation

Catholic Physicians' Guild (1935) "Why Maternity Guilds?" *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 4 : No. 1 , Article 4.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol4/iss1/4>

WHY MATERNITY GUILDS?

The Editor here reprints from The Catholic Worker some striking paragraphs from an address of Dorothy Weston before the Catholic Women's Union at the organization of a maternity guild in New York City.

You may wonder why *The Catholic Worker*, a paper devoted to the restating and applying of the Church's teachings on social justice, should interest itself in Maternity Guilds. The answer may be found in the words of our Holy Father, in his encyclical on Christian Marriage, where he deplors the economic conditions that in our day have become an occasion of sin to many in the performance of their marital duties.

"Since it is no rare thing to find that the perfect observance of God's commands and conjugal integrity encounter difficulties because the married parties are oppressed by straitened circumstances, their necessities must be relieved as far as possible. . . ."

Karl Adam, one of the greatest living Catholic philosophers and theologians, says: "By the very fact that the members of Christ are united in marriage, their union becomes a sacrament of the union between Christ and the Church. The fundamental mystery of Christianity, the nuptial relationship between Christ and His Church, the fact that Christ and His Church are one sole Body, is realized anew in every marriage. Wherever a Christian bride and bridegroom unite in wedlock, the holy union which exists between the most sacred humanity of Christ and its members receives new actuality. Christian marriage is consequently . . . spiritual in its very essence. It has existence only by the fact that in it Christ's sacred nuptials, His union with the Church in one sole Body, is actualized. It represents that sacred sphere of life on earth in which the mystery of the Body of Christ visibly reveals itself."

It is a breath-taking concept, showing us the true dignity of marriage and of parenthood. In this concept children are not a burden, they are not a duty demanded of us by the Church, a weight of responsibility by which we pay for the pleasures of the married state. They are the very fulness of the sacrament by which the Body of Christ is renewed through love. Christian parents, themselves part of the mystical Christ, are privileged to cooperate with God in the supreme act of creation.

Shall we allow the joy of this privilege to be drowned in the flood of worldly cares that afflict families under an unjust economic system? Too few even Catholic women find cause for rejoicing in their privilege today. Selfishness, of course, is one reason. But, where financial stringency is a contributing factor, let it not be said that we, fellow-members of one another in Christ, have failed to remove this obstacle to the fulness of His Sacrament. This is the work the Maternity Guild asks you to do. Will you help Christian parents in their renewal of the Body of Christ?