

**TO THE CONGREGATIONS OF  
THE SYNOD OF CENTRAL  
CANADA,  
GREETINGS:**

By the time these lines reach you the year 1915 will have grown old, infirm and lain down on its wintry death bed. It has bequeathed to its successor all that it possessed—the good and the bad. It has been a year of tempest and strife. It has staggered the world by the gigantic loss of life, waste of wealth and misery. It has filled men with fear and perplexity. Men's hearts have failed them. The enterprises of the Church have suffered terribly. It has left tremendous problems unsolved. We have been spared through it all, and have the privilege and duty to help solve them. For this we are thankful to our Lord and God. We look hopefully into the coming year and ask: "Shall we grow more spiritual? Shall we increase in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Shall our faith become firmer, more able to withstand the assaults of doubt, misgiving and despair? Shall we overcome the world through faith? Shall our love for Christ and His Church be purified of dross, of self-seeking and self-exaltation? Shall we see more and more of His excellency? Shall we, like Enoch of old, walk with God every day and all the way? Shall we be more faithful witnesses for Him Who is our Lord and Redeemer?"

In view of these questions permit me to direct your attention to the following considerations:

First—Our home life. The Church of Christ must have its beginning in the home. Parents are the natural teachers of religion. This fact creates an obligation which cannot be shifted to the church or school. We NEED a better home life. As the home is, so will be the state.

Second—The unwholesome and degenerating influences of the abounding and increasing desire for pleasure and amusement. "Life is real and life is earnest." We need to be watchful in this respect, if we desire to secure the higher grade of Christian character.

Third—Church loyalty. As citizens of our country we have learned as never before, the meaning of the words Loyalty and Patriotism. We have rallied to our country and flag. Our sons and our money has been placed at the country's disposal. All this was done freely and gladly. We

have also shown a noble loyalty to our Church, both in financial support, benevolence and giving our sons for the ministry. Our people have most loyally rallied to the needs of our Seminary at Waterloo. God has opened to us a wonderful door of opportunity by this institution, and we have made an effort to meet it in the spirit of true Christian loyalty. Nor have we failed to reap the fruits. At least four of our churches would have been closed, and would, in all probability, be closed now, had it not been for this institution. We are thankful to our heavenly Father for all He has done for us and through us. Yet we deplore whatever indifference there is—and there is not a little. Much more might have been accomplished if all our members had been loyal. There has been a great deal of indifference in regard to church attendance and devout worship in God's House. Waiting on the Lord in His House on the Lord's Day is absolutely necessary to the true Christian life. A churchless community is a community in great danger. Therefore, let me appeal to you to be conscientiously regular at your appointed church services. See that your children and friends are with you. Despise not the means of grace—the Word and Sacraments. It is here where sincere worship is offered and the greatest benevolence are wisely stimulated, planned and effected. All these treasures have been purchased for us through the suffering of our Lord.

Fourth—The matter of engaging often in prayer for those not yet in fellowship with Jesus Christ at home and abroad. Permit me to summon you to the task that He laid upon the early church of winning men, one by one to Christian discipleship.

Your pastors in Christ have only your highest interests at heart. May we not depend upon you, then, to support us in our efforts by your prayers and co-operation. May we not each and all seek by the grace of God to be more faithful to Him, that we may grow more spiritual as well as more liberal with our means. We cannot believe that you will be heedless of this kindly message: and heeding it I am sure that the results will be a purer, higher, more hopeful and prosperous New Year. As we think so we are. For "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

REV. J. MAURER, M.A.,  
President.