

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE

I learn as the years roll onward And leave the past behind That much I have counted sorrow But prove our God is kind; That many a flower I longed for Had a hidden thorn of pain, And many a rugged bypath Led to fields of ripened grain.

The clouds but cover the sunshine They cannot banish the sun. And the earth shines out brighter When the weary rain is done. We must stand in the deepest sorrow To see the clearest light, And often from wrong's own darkness Comes the very strength of right.

We must live through the weary winter If we could value the spring, And the woods must be cold and silent Before the robins sing. The flowers must be buried in darkness Before they could bud and bloom, And the sweetest and warmest sunshine Comes after the storm and gloom.

So the heart from the hardest trial Gains the purest joy of all, And from lips that have tasted sadness The sweetest songs will fall, For as peace comes after suffering, And love is reward of pain, So after earth comes heaven And out of our loss the gain.

—Intermountain Catholic

CHEERFULNESS

Moments spent with cheerful people have refreshed you, putting a new vigor and courage into your endeavors. Why not begin to do your part in the scattering of gloom clouds, and give to others the same happy impulses? Your petty troubles, if unduly magnified, will eventually overcast the skies of your little world. After all, don't you realize that "gloom" is merely a simplified spelling of "inordinate selfishness?" —Intermountain Catholic.

MY SMILE

Our smile still holds its wonted place, due east and west across our face, and sometimes it seems half inclined to reach around and tie behind. We cannot dance, nor can we sing, but we can tote a smile, by jing! Sometimes we push it from its place, but that is when we shave our face, and when we have done shaving, then, our smile is on the job again. Worms may kill our tomato plants, hot irons may scorch our Palm Beach pants, laundries may spiculate our shirts and fix our collar so it hurts, a neighbor's dog may kill our cat, but our smile stays right where it's at, and being such a happy cus makes the old world smile back at us. Misfortune cannot get your goat if you have got a smile to tote. —Judd Mortimer Lewis.

ORDER IN BUSINESS

System, order, neatness, accuracy, speed—all these things help to success. Taken by themselves they may not mean much, but when they lead to success and success amounts to a great deal. Therefore treasure them for what they produce, if not also for what they are. The desk of the average business man is usually cluttered and in great disorder. The cluttered desk stands for a waste of time and of energy. Thousands of men spend more time looking for things than it is necessary to take in giving them attention when they are found.

The proprietor of a business may do as he pleases. He has earned the right to be independent; but you, as an employee, will be inexcusably at fault if you do not practice order and system. No matter what the man above you does, it is your duty to attend to your own affairs properly and also to endeavor to assist those who are above you.

Ask your employer's permission to set his desk in order, to look through the litter upon it. Usually he will grant this request and appreciate your efforts; and when he experiences the relief of having a "place for everything and everything in its place" he will grow to depend upon you and find it hard to get along without you.

Don't trust to your memory entirely. Keep a diary or have a pad calendar on your desk. Enter everything which should be attended to and don't fail to consult your memoranda every day. Go farther. Look over the dates for the coming week. If your employer makes an engagement, put it down and remind him of it.

I consider a memorandum book absolutely essential to the conduct of every kind of business. Better make too many entries than too few. Even unimportant things should be written down.

Show your employer that you are interested in his work, that you are keeping track of things for him, that you can be depended upon. Take the initiative in this direction. Your efforts will be appreciated.

Be systematic. Don't leave things around. If anything drops on the floor, pick it up immediately. Don't let the drawers of your desk stand open. Don't have any private matters on your desk which can be seen by the passerby. Turn letters upside down and keep other items of information out of sight. Many a great loss has occurred because an employee was careless in this direction and left information lying about so that it could be seen by an outsider or a competitor.

You cannot be too careful of little things. Better stay a few minutes over time and leave your desk in good condition.

Feel that the business is yours and realize your responsibility. No matter how subordinate your position may be, you are a link in the chain of business, and many a loss has occurred because some seemingly unimportant item was not attended to, or a letter was misplaced, or an entry was not made in a diary.

The carelessness of your employer or the head of your department does not justify you in being careless. When you want to follow in the footsteps of your superiors, pick out the characteristics which are worthy of emulation.

First, last, and always be orderly. Catholic Columbian.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

SHORT SKETCH OF LIVES OF SAINTS OF THE WEEK

DECEMBER 10.—ST. EULALIA, VIRGIN, MARTYR

St. Eulalia was a native of Merida, in Spain. She was but twelve years old when the bloody edicts of Diocletian were issued. Eulalia presented herself before the cruel judge Dacianus, and reproached him for attempting to destroy souls by compelling them to renounce the only true God. The governor commanded her to be seized, and at first tried to win her over by flattery, but failing in this, he had recourse to threats, and caused the most dreadful instruments of torture to be placed before her eyes, saying to her: "All this you shall escape if you will but touch a little salt and frankincense with the tip of your finger." Provoked at these seducing flatteries, our Saint threw down the idol, and trampled upon the cake which was laid for the sacrifice. At the judge's order, two executioners took her tender sides with iron hooks, so as to leave the very bones bare. Next lighted torches were applied to her breasts and sides; under which torment, instead of groans, nothing was heard from her mouth but thanksgivings. The fire at length catching her hair, surrounded her head and face, and the Saint was stifled by the smoke and flame.

DECEMBER 11.—ST. DAMASUS, POPE

St. Damasus was born at Rome at the beginning of the fourth century. He was archdeacon of the Roman Church in 355, when Pope Liberius was banished to Berda, and followed him into exile, but afterwards returned to Rome. On the death of Liberius our Saint was chosen to succeed him. Ursinus, a competitor for the high office, incited a revolt, but the holy Pope took only such action as was becoming to the common father of the faithful. Having freed the Church of this new schism, he turned his attention to the extirpation of Arianism in the West and of Apollinarianism in the East, and for this purpose he convened several councils. He rebuilt the Church of St. Laurence, which to this day is known as St. Laurence in Damasus; he made many valuable presents to this church, and settled upon it houses and lands in its vicinity. He likewise drained all the springs of the Vatican, which ran over the bodies that were buried there, and decorated the sepulchres of a great number of martyrs in the cemetery, and adorned them with epitaphs in verse. Having sat eighteen years and two months, he died on the 10th of December, in 384, being near fourscore years of age.

DECEMBER 12.—ST. VALERY, ABBOT, —ST. FINIAN, BISHOP

This Saint was born at Auvergne, in the sixth century, and in his childhood kept his father's sheep. He was yet young when he took the monastic habit in the neighboring monastery of St. Anthony. Seeking the most perfect means of advancing in the paths of all virtues, he passed from this house to the more austere monastery of St. Germainus of Auxerre, and finally to that of Luxeu, where he spent many years. He travelled into Neustria, where he converted many infidels, and assembled certain fervent disciples, and laid the foundation of a monastery. Saint Valery went to receive the recompense of his happy perseverance on 12th of December in 622.

St. Finian was a native of Leinster, was instructed in the elements of Christian virtue by the disciples of St. Patrick, and passed over into Wales; but about the year 520 he returned in Ireland. To propagate the work of God, our Saint established several monasteries and schools. St. Finian was chosen and consecrated Bishop of Clonard. In the love of his flock and his zeal for their salvation he was infirm with the infirm, and wept with those that wept. He healed the souls, and often also the bodies, of those that applied to him. He departed to our Lord on the 12th of December in 652.

DECEMBER 13.—ST. LUCY, VIRGIN, MARTYR

The mother of St. Lucy suffered four years from an issue of blood, and the help of man failed. St. Lucy reminded her mother that a woman in the Gospel had been healed of the same disorder. "St. Agatha," she said, "stands ever in the sight of Him for Whom she died. Only touch her sepulchre with faith, and you will be healed." They spent the night praying by the tomb, till overcame by weariness, both fell asleep. St. Agatha appeared in vision to St. Lucy, and calling her sister, foretold her mother's recovery and her own martyrdom. That instant the cure

was effected; and in her gratitude the mother allowed her daughter to distribute her wealth among the poor, and consecrate her virginity to Christ. A young man to whom she had been promised in marriage accused her as a Christian to the heathen; but Our Lord, by a special miracle, saved from outrage this virgin whom He had chosen for His own. The fire kindled around her did her no hurt. Then the sword was plunged into her heart, and the promise made at the tomb of St. Agatha was fulfilled.

DECEMBER 14.—ST. NICASIUS, ARCH-BISHOP, AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

In the fifth century an army of barbarians from Germany ravaging part of Gaul, plundered the city of Rheims. Nicasius, the holy bishop, had foretold this calamity to his flock. When he saw the enemy at the gates and in the streets, forgetting himself, and solicitous only for his spiritual children, he went from door to door encouraging all to patience and constancy, and awaking in every breast the most heroic sentiments of piety and religion. In endeavoring to save the lives of his flock he exposed himself to the swords of the infidels, who, after a thousand insults and indignities, cut off his head. Florens, his deacon, and Jocond, his lector, were massacred by his side. His sister Eutrophia, a virtuous virgin, fearing she might be reserved for a fate worse than death, boldly cried out to the infidels that it was her unalterable resolution rather to sacrifice her life than her faith or her integrity and virtue. Upon which they despatched her with their cutlasses.

DECEMBER 15.—ST. MESSIN

St. Messin was a native of Verdun. The inhabitants of that place having proved disloyal to King Clovis, an uncle of our Saint's, a priest named Eusepius, brought about a reconciliation between the monarch and his subjects. Clovis, appreciating the virtues of Eusepius, persuaded him to take up his residence at court, and the servant of God took St. Messin along with him. While journeying to Orleans with Clovis he noticed at about two leagues from the city, beyond the Loire, a solitary spot called Micy, which he thought well suited for a retreat. Having asked for and obtained the place, he with Messin and several disciples built there a monastery, of which he took charge. At his death, which happened about two years after, our Saint was appointed abbot by Eusepius, Bishop of Orleans. During a terrible famine he fed nearly the whole city of Orleans with wheat from his monastery, without perceptibly reducing it; he also drove an enormous serpent out of the place in which he was afterwards buried. Having governed his monastery ten years, he died as he had lived, in the odor of sanctity, on the 15th of December, 520.

DECEMBER 16.—ST. EUSEBIUS, BISHOP

St. Eusebius was born of a noble family, in the island of Sardinia, where his father is said to have died in prison for the Faith. The Saint's mother carried him and his sister, both infants, to Rome. Eusebius having been ordained, served the Church of Vercelli with such zeal that he was unanimously chosen, by both clergy and people, to fill it. The holy bishop saw that the best and first means to labor effectually for the edification and sanctification of his people was to have a zealous clergy. He was at the same time very careful to instruct his flock, and inspire them with the love of the Gospel. The force of the truth which he preached, together with his example, brought many sinners to a change of life. He courageously fought against the heretics, who had him banished to Scythopolis, and thence to Upper Thebais in Egypt, where he suffered so grievously as to win in some of the panegyrics in his praise, the title of martyr. He died in the latter part of the year 371.

SAFE AND SANE STANDARD

The Catholic Church ever insists that man's supreme concern in life is the salvation of his soul. To that all other interests are subservient and secondary. In the affairs of the world a man may be successful, but should his soul be lost, life for him, in reality, is a dismal failure. In trials, reverses, sorrows, and misfortunes a man may spend his life, but if it closes only to enter upon eternal joy, that life is truly crowned with the palm of victory. Life is but a time of trial; upon it eternity hangs.

This solemn thought directs the Church in her attitude towards the problems and policies in which the welfare of man is concerned. Man has an exalted destiny which makes him a being of an exalted nature. By that dignity and destiny the Church measures the worth of every human institution. These are the standards by which she appraises the moral character of every social theory and the value of every social practice. That which squares with man's nature and destiny she marks with her approval; that which aids a man to save his soul she accepts.

This is the fundamental philosophy which is back of the Church's system of education. Schools conducted under State auspices are not calculated to make man appreciate his true nature nor to inspire him to attain his true destiny. The Public School has become Godless and un-Christian. In it the child learns nothing of his Creator, nothing of the

duties he has towards his God. Judged by the standard of human dignity and destiny such a school is far from being a blessing. That is why the parochial school has taken its place beside the Public School. The wisdom of the Catholic educational policy becomes ever more manifest as the years go by. The defence of her position in this regard is no longer a matter of concern only to Catholics. Thoughtful men outside her fold and in little sympathy with her doctrines and her practices are forced by the trend of events to recognize as correct the principles upon which her educational system rests.

In other fields of endeavor, political, industrial or charitable, disastrous tendencies similar to those at work in educational activities need correction. Methods of reform will be sound and fruitful only in the measure in which they conform to principles of sane philosophy. Reformers must ever work in the dark unless they make sure of these fundamental truths to serve as their standards—man possesses a spiritual nature and in the possession of that nature he is destined for life eternal. —Boston Pilot.

CONFESSION

OBJECTIONS TO AND CURIOUS NOTIONS ABOUT IT

The leading objections which non-Catholics urge against confession are differently put by different people; but the substance of them is about the same throughout. First that it is too hard for men or women to tell their sins, their thoughts, their desires, to a fellow-mortal, a man. It is not easy. Nobody likes it much so far as we know; for though there is a great relief in telling our sins, that relief is not experienced until the tale is told. No one likes confession until he has confessed; and no one could fail to like it then, even though it had no sacramental results whatever.

But the hardship of confession is no argument at all that it is not necessary and obligatory. Christ did not ask men what they would like to do. He bade them do and obey; and to overcome whatever in their weakness might make it difficult to do or to obey. The point is, that there is a sacrament here; a means of getting God's grace, and His forgiveness for our sins. If non-Catholics had rejected the whole doctrine of sacraments; had they said there were no sacraments at all; had they denied the existence of any outward and visible procedure for applying God's grace to men's souls, one could better understand their rejection of confession. But they have never wholly rejected all sacraments. Most of them believe, with variations, and some uncertainties in baptism and a "Lord's Supper" or holy communion.

Confession is a sacrament; and being such, it is reasonable to ask men and women to ignore their natural dislike to the penitential process of confessing their sins to a man, in order to have the benefit of that sacrament. This is the answer to the objection we have referred to. Yes, it is too hard a thing to ask men to do for a smaller reason than the application of a sacrament; but for that great purpose, it is not too much to ask. If the sacrament of penance remits sin, the hardship of confessing is, in comparison, a small matter. There is no use in raising side-issues in these great matters; and the objection that confessing is too hard is a side-issue only. If non-Catholics believed confession to be a sacrament in which sin is forgiven, they would never again mention the hardship of confessing.

And though no one likes to confess, or very few, it is a great mistake to suppose that it is, as Calvin called it, a rack, or a torture. Calvin said that "Rome" applied a rack to the consciences of men; but he probably knew better; for he had been a Catholic himself; and he probably only meant it in a rhetorical sense. Catholic confessors do not rack consciences. There is no place in the world where more complete respect is paid to conscience than in the confessional. Some non-Catholics may find that hard to believe. But we recommend to them to consider, that in every century since Christ, millions of men have gone to confession who would not dream of permitting the rack of Calvin's imagination to be applied to their consciences.

Think you that when a Catholic Chief Justice of Canada or England goes to confession to a young priest just out of his seminary, he goes there to be put on a rack? Of all the institutions in the world which ever had anything to do with men's consciences, none has such regard for them as the Catholic Church. The greatest geniuses of all ages have knelt in the confessional. For what? To listen respectfully to the voice of God's priest. Of course. To question rashly a theological opinion, knowing no theology themselves. Surely not. To give their consciences up to be racked or remade? Not at all. In confession a man is his own accuser. If he does not accuse himself there is no one else to accuse him.

"Oh, but," some will say that it is all very well as to men of education; but when the priest gets hold of ignorant people, or timid people, then he racks their consciences. We could wish that, without sacrilege, some of these conscientious persons might ever have an avowed person's interview with the priest in the confessional.

The delightful priest-novelist, Canon Sheehan, described the children coming to his knee: "Thank ye, fader," said the girls. "All right," said the boys—"All right, old chap."

The late Father Phelan, of St. Louis, used to tell of his first sitting in the confessional. He was ordained in the morning. In the afternoon he took his seat for the first time in a confessional. His first penitent was an aged Irish woman. He heard her brief statement; and then gave her a somewhat lengthy instruction. She dumbfounded him by saying, when he was through: "Father, dear, I knew all that before you were born."

There is confidence and love for the sacred character of the priesthood and reverence for the sacrament, and fatherly kindness—sometimes, fatherly sternness too—and trust, and help, and peace and calm, and happiness, in the confessional. But as for the racking of consciences, the torturing of nerves; as for tyranny or slavery—men and women who have been going to confession all their lives, smile when they hear such things said.

The lack of information, outside the Church about confession is remarkable and lamentable. Last winter, we were in the smoking-room of a hotel in Halifax one Sunday morning. A Catholic officer back from the front started out to Mass. Another young officer, not a Catholic, remarked: "K. is very regular." "Where's he going," asked a Protestant gentleman. "To Mass." "Well," said the inquirer, "and he said it quite as a matter of fact, and without any trace of nastiness,—he's gone to confession now, and he can do as he likes the rest of the week." "We asked him to state that over again. He did so; and seemed to be serious. So we said, 'I have been forty-five years in the Catholic Church, and never heard this before. Do you mean that Catholics go to confession on Sunday mornings?' "Yes," said he, "all good Catholics are supposed to go."

Observe the introduction of the word "good." We meet this quite often. A differentiation is attempted; or a classification. Prejudice imagines a kind of Catholic who is a "good Catholic," or a "devout Romanist," who is in touch with Rome and her strange practices. Confront them with Catholics who obviously would not adore a picture, or take out a weekly license to do what they liked; and still they are safe. These are not "good Catholics" or not devout Romanists.

This gentleman was a businessman holding a commercial position of some little importance in Halifax. "Yes," said he, "all good Catholics are supposed to go." "You say," we said to him, "that they can do what they like during the week. Do you mean sinful or not sinful?" "Yes," said he, "anything in reason; white lies and things like that." He was apparently hedging a little, yet he held to his idea. We questioned him a bit as to where he got that idea. And he told us he had travelled a good deal; and he had met Catholic Bishops and Archbishops; and had been told by them that it was so. "Catholic Bishops and Archbishops told you this?" And he answered, "Yes."

We think he was sincere in his first statement. Whether he sincerely believed that a bishop had told him we do not know. Nothing deceives a man's mind like a prejudice. There is a case on record where an English lady of undoubted honesty, declared that she had seen in Rome a statue of the mythical "Pope Joan," and had read the inscription "Joan, Pope," at the base of the statue; and it is doubtful whether all the proofs in the world that the statue was of another woman, and the inscription was quite other than what she thought would have changed her idea. The limits of the possibilities of anti-Catholic prejudice are hard to find.

On the main point, at least we think the gentleman we speak of was sincere. He did actually believe what he said on that point. We told him one or two facts; but it is much to be doubted whether he was influenced by what we said; though he did not persist.

It is remarkable and regrettable that non-Catholics should be so entirely without information on a matter which enters so deeply into the lives of the thousands of Catholic fellow-citizens who live and act and die right beside them and around them. But so it is. Confession is, to us, a vital part of our lives; but if we lived in the moon, and non-Catholics alone occupied the earth, there could not be, amongst them, more general or more complete misinformation and misunderstanding as to what confession means and what it is.—The Casket.

A GOOD ADVERTISING MEDIUM

We believe that the weekly religious paper is a good medium for advertising, and we base our belief on good reasons, says The Catholic Northwest Progress. It is a home paper, read largely by everyone in the home, young and old. Moreover, it is read leisurely and completely; every column is thoroughly scanned.

Not so with the daily paper. To be sure, curiosity compels us to take it, but at best it gets up a hasty scanning. One glances over the daily paper, one reads the religious paper. Moreover the daily paper generally starts tomorrow's fire, while the religious paper is either kept or passed on to a friend.

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