

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

FRIENDSHIP

A friend is one whose worth is known, Not bartered at a random guess; A homely soil where seeds are sown To bloom in trust and kindness.

Cheap intimacies flash in flame, And swiftly burn their passion out; Begin with ardent, wild acclaim, And end in traitorship or doubt.

THE NINE FIRST FRIDAYS

Our Lord wished to win back men to His love and showered still greater love on the wanderer. Man was taken up with the toys of the world; his passions spurred him away from God; his head was lowered by the pressing burden of flesh.

WHAT INTERESTS YOU MOST?

Have you ever squarely asked yourself, "What are the things I am most interested in?" It is a question you might find worth putting—especially if you have to confess that you have not been succeeding in your chosen vocation as you had hoped you would.

That vocation ought to be about as interesting to you as anything could be. Is it? Or do you look upon it merely as a means to the necessary end of earning a living?

Are you more interested in the amusements of your leisure hours? Are you so interested in, let us say, the theater or the "movies" that you go to the theater or "movies" at every opportunity, perhaps stealing time from your work to do this?

Are you so interested in dancing that you count that week lost which does not see you in attendance at two or three dances?

I sincerely trust that self-examination will not compel you to acknowledge yourself among these poor people—dominated not exactly by unworthy interests, but at all events interests hardly worthy of anything resembling enthusiasm.

And, on the other hand, I trust that self-examination will show you to yourself as belonging to the equally numerous group of people who are really interested in nothing whatsoever.

If you are one of these luckless wights, bestir yourself to develop a keener interest in something—most of all in your work. And bestir yourself likewise to gain a keener interest in your work if your life is motivated by obsessive interests outside it.

Otherwise you will always lag, always be outdistanced. Life's winners are those—and only those—who sense the delight of constructive achievement and rejoice in their work above all things as offering them the sure means for constructive achievement.—Michigan Catholic.

KEEP AT IT

Some years ago while traveling about a rural district, we chanced to ride behind a horse which frequently had to be pulled back into the road. The driver remarked, "He's a splendid traveler so long

as there is no turn off. But if there's a lane or a crossroad, he always wants to try it. I'm afraid I've got to get rid of him because it's a nuisance to be always pulling him back on the road."

Lots of folks are like that. They can keep steadily at a task so long as there is no side attraction. The old tortoise, of school-reader fame, won the race because he plodded straight ahead while the hare turned aside for a nap.

History furnishes no more splendid example of this keeping to the road than that of Columbus. Though jeers and mutiny and various attractions bade him turn aside, he kept to his purpose of sailing west. Thus he gained a world; he gave that world its watchword: "On! and on!"

St. Paul, glimpsing the goal beyond, said: "This one thing I do: I press on toward the mark." And again, "None of these things move me, that I may finish my course with joy."

Every planet moves, unswerving in its own appointed course; keeps to its own orbit. Artists, musicians, sculptors, authors, scientists, all keep at one big idea, make it the main force in life, until a great result is accomplished.

This keeping to the road applies to every task in life, big or little, whether a lesson to be learned, a home duty to be performed, a public speech to be made, a business deal to be put through, or what not. We must turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to all that would turn us aside and press on to the finish.—Catholic Bulletin.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

ROSES

I went to gather roses and twine them in a ring, For I would make a posy, a posy for the King. I got a hundred roses, the loveliest there be, From the white rose vine and the pink rose bush and from the red rose tree.

But when I took my posy and laid it at His feet, I found He had His roses a million times more sweet; There was a scarlet blossom upon each foot and hand, And a great pink rose bloomed from His side for the healing of the land.

Now of this fair and awful King there is this marvel told: That He wears a crown of linked Where there are thorns are roses; and I saw a line of red, A little wreath of roses around His radiant head.

A red rose in His Sacred Heart, a white rose in His face; And His bare throne has turned the barren world to a rich and flowery place.

He is the Rose of Sharon, His gardener am I; And I shall drink His fragrance in Heaven when I die.

MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART

God is essentially love. Love is the reason for all His works. It was divine love that caused the Creation, and when the creature by offending the Creator had forfeited His heirship, it was love that devised a means by which a reconciliation could be effected. Love drew the second Person of the Blessed Trinity from the bosom of His Father and clothed Him with human nature.

The stories of Bethlehem and Nazareth speak to us of the tenderness of an infinite love. Love again, in response to His Mother's pity and love, caused Jesus' first miracle to be wrought at the marriage feast in Cana, and in later years love directed all His miracles. It was love that cured the sick and healed the lepers, made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the dead to return to life. But there is a test of perfect love which the Divine Saviour Himself has declared to be the supreme proof and, it is that a man should lay down his life for his friend. More even than this did Christ do, for He died for His enemies that they might become His friends, and only the strength of an infinite love could have supported Him through the terrible death ordeal which He chose for Himself.

It might seem that even divine love had exhausted itself in the Crucifixion of the Son of God. The Good Shepherd had laid down His life for His sheep and proved Himself not a hireling. But this supreme sacrifice did not suffice for the love of the Sacred Heart. That Heart could not bear to be separated from the creatures whom it loved to such an excess up. Therefore the resources of God's power were called upon for the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Had Our Divine Lord been satisfied with redeeming the world by the sacrifice of His life upon Mount Calvary, it would indeed have been much, and sacred history would have preserved this great record for the reverent and prayerful meditation of all generations to come. But He who reads the secrets of our souls, knew well the weakness of poor fallen mankind, its proneness to become the prey of passion and pleasure and the necessity of a living fire to keep alive the ardor of divine charity in the heart of humanity. Therefore He decreed literally to fulfil His

promise, "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," by remaining always on every altar where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. He is there to give Himself to us in Holy Communion, to be carried to our bedside when we are sick or dying, to receive our visits, to convey many a sweet message to the silent chambers of our souls, to give consolation to our sorrowing hearts, and perhaps to excite remorse within us for our infidelity to His love. Every one is welcome who comes with an humble heart, and even the sinner need not fear to remain in His presence if he will only resolve to give up his sin.

It would be natural to think that in return for such condescension and love as God has shown in establishing the Holy Eucharist, that the whole Christian world would be in constant adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. What a happy world were it really so, but how far from being realized is such an ideal condition! On the altar daily the miracle of Transubstantiation is being wrought yet comparatively few care to be present, except on these days when it is positively commanded. The multitudes do not partake of the Bread of Life as frequently as they should. The Prisoner of the Tabernacle, alone many hours of the day and night, when numbers of those upon whom He has lavished His favors might easily keep Him company. Some fervent souls there are indeed, who strive to return love for love, and there are His consolation. But the vast majority are either indifferent or contemptuously unbelieving, and this poor requital of His consuming love has inflicted a painful wound upon the tender Heart of Jesus.

It is more than two centuries ago since the holy nun, Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque was favored by the revelations which Our Divine Lord made of His Sacred Heart and its burning love for men. He made magnificent promises for those who would practise devotion to His Heart and strive to make reparation for the pain and injury it endured through the ingratitude of men. He complained more of the coldness and indifference of those who should be His fervent friends and upon whom He had bestowed many special graces, than of the great wickedness and insults of unbelievers. He craves the love of our poor, inconstant hearts, a love which is humble and self-denying and has learned to make sacrifices for conscience sake. It is not a mere sentiment that He desires, but a steady flame which purifies from earthly affections and leaves a victory for supernatural grace.

The month of June is consecrated especially to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Its bright days breathe love to the human heart, and our most faithful Lover asks the homage of our devotion in return for the infinite love He has given us. In these days of horrible conflicts with the consequent suffering, sorrow and deep distress, a universal cry for pity and help should find constant utterance in the presence of that compassionate Heart which prompted His Sacred Lips to utter the invitation, "Come to Me, all ye who labor and are heavily laden, and I will refresh you."—The Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN EUROPE

The Great War destroyed the map of Europe and made a new one. A study of this new map from a Catholic standpoint, reveals some interesting discoveries to a writer in the Catholic Times. The most important fact discovered is that there are more Catholic nationalities in Europe organized at States, in 1922 than there were in 1914. The breakup of the Schismatic Empire of the Russian Czars, made tremendous changes. Two new states, Poland and Lithuania, broken off from the old Empire are Catholic countries. Lithuania has a total population of four and three quarters millions. Of these three and a half millions, more than 75 per cent. are Catholics. The President of the Republic, Dr. Stulginkis and many of the ministry are Catholics.

SPIRITISM IS FORM OF SATANISM

Under the title "Spiritism, the Modern Satanism," the Rev. Dr. Thomas F. Coakley, pastor of St. Patrick's church, Pittsburgh, has published, through the Extension Press of Chicago, an admirable exposition of modern mediumistic methods and a clear definition of the attitude of the Church toward the doctrines enunciated by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and other exponents of what they are pleased to style "the new revelation."

These leaders of a dangerous cult disagree among themselves in regard to many matters, but it should be significant to Christians that they are united in the declaration that Christ was not the Divine Son of God. Not only so, but, as Dr. Coakley points out, they assert that He was merely a medium and that all the miracles recorded in the New Testament are simply spiritistic phenomena.

With these assertions positively proclaimed, the prophets of the "new revelation" blandly announce themselves as the protectors of religion, the defenders of the doctrine of immortality and the consolers of the bereaved.

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Finland, Estonia, and Latvia are mainly Protestant, but in all three the Catholic minority has complete religious freedom. It is noteworthy that when the independence of Finland was established, one of the first acts of the new government, in which there was not one Catholic member, was to send a diplomatic mission to the Holy See to assure the Pope of its good will to its Catholic citizens. Ukraine, the Southern Russian Republic under Soviet rule has liberty of worship, and contains nine million Catholics of a total population of thirty millions. The prospect of unity with Rome is exceedingly bright in Russia owing to the downfall of Czarism, with its immemorial state policy of separation from Rome.

Like Russia the old Austrian Empire has been shattered into fragments. In the two new Republics that have come into being in consequence, the Catholic population is in the decided majority. In the bordering States the condition is somewhat different. The new kingdom known popularly as Jugoslavia, but officially as the Serb, Croat, and Slovene State guarantees freedom of worship to all, and has several millions of Catholics in its population of eleven millions.

The northern Republic of Czechoslovakia, made up of Bohemia, Moravia, and border districts of Austria, has twelve million Catholics, out of a total population of thirteen and a half millions. The unfortunate Czech schism greatly exaggerated, is now declining and Czechoslovakia will soon be a solidly Catholic State.

The older States of Europe are undergoing a Catholic revival. In Germany where Prussianism meant the protection of Lutheranism, a Catholic Dr. Wirth, is Chancellor, and at the last Catholic Congress of Germany he was present, and Germany realized the changed state of affairs by witnessing the successor of Bismarck kneeling to receive the Papal Benediction.

The increase of membership in Catholic associations, the abundance of vocations, and the circulation of the Catholic press shows a great revival of catholicism in the new German State. France according to a statistical review in the Revue des Deux Mondes has given evidence of a Catholic resurgence in the increase shown in the number of Paschal Communion, in the frequentation of the sacraments, in attendance at Mass, in the increase of the birthrate, and in the growth of Catholic opinion revived by the resumption of diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

Belgium has just seen the triumph of the Catholic party at the recent elections. Her northern neighbor Holland, long considered a Protestant country, now has two-fifths of her population Catholic, and the chief of the Government and several of his colleagues are Catholics.

The little States of Luxemburg and Liechtenstein are solidly Catholic. Two years ago the ruler of Luxemburg, the Grand Duchess Maria Adelaide, resigned her coronet to enter a convent where this year she took her vows. An army of only two hundred and fifty men acts really as a police force. For peace and prosperity the larger powers may well envy the little Catholic States of Luxemburg and Liechtenstein. All in all the prospect of Catholicism in Europe as seen from this rapid survey of political conditions is bright.—The Pilot.

The observation of the centenary of the conversion of Lithuania last November was the occasion of public rejoicing in which the government took part. The constitution guarantees equality before the law to all citizens whatever their creed, but the Government recognizes the fact that the people are mainly a Catholic nation.

Poland has 27 millions of people, of whom 70 per cent. are Catholic. The whole tradition of Poland like Ireland has been Catholic. Last June the whole Polish nation was solemnly dedicated to the Sacred Heart. The majority of the members of Parliament are Catholics. Of her six universities, only one, that of Warsaw is officially described as a Catholic University, yet Catholic theology is taught in all.

Catholic teaching is given in the schools. Catholic organization, charitable, religious, educational, and industrial has been wonderfully extended in the last three years. While secular press reports stress the news of trouble and dissensions in Poland, we do not hear very much of the upbuilding of a great Catholic nation, that the new republic is so successfully undertaking.

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As proof in one instance is virtually admitted in the anxiety shown to substitute an entirely different theory as proof in some other. The physical, mental and moral dangers of the new manifestations of an old cult are brought to light by Dr. Coakley in a convincing manner. Of the spiritual dangers to Catholics who may be tempted to dabble in Spiritism, the author speaks plainly. He points out that both champions and opponents of the Spiritistic position are among those who believe that in many cases of modern mediums there is evidence of demonic possessions. He reminds his readers of the petition offered every day after Mass imploring protection against the snares of the enemy, Satan, "and the other evil spirits who prowl about the world, seeking the ruin of souls."

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