

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

THE ROAD OF ONLY-ONCE

'Tis a solemn thought to ponder 'Mid our daily joys and cares, Whilst we work, or weep, or wonder At our play, or at our prayers; 'Tis a saintly sage's warning, Ever old, yet ever new, I am walking by a pathway I shall never more pursue.

I can tread it once—once only; Tread it well or tread it ill; Keep my selfish course, or lonely Join the many of good will, But ne'er my steps retracing, May I life's mistake undo, For I am walking by a pathway I shall never more pursue.

If the good that there awaits me Be neglected, ill-done; If the evil there that tempts me I have no idea to shun, Woe is me! alas! forever My lost graces shall I rue, Heaven or Hell must end this pathway I shall never more pursue.

THE ADVENT SEASON

The holy season of Advent ushers in a new ecclesiastical year. Now begins again that glorious cycle of feasts that makes the life of the Christian a continuous preparation for Heaven. The first Sunday of Advent is the ecclesiastical New Year. It is a time of beginnings, the season of new efforts and fresh endeavors. The reawakening and reinvigoration that must arouse and stimulate the earnest striver after justice is indicated in the liturgy of the Church for the Advent season.

"It is now the hour to rouse from sleep" is the call that the Church places on the lips of her ministers at the beginning of Advent. The spiritual languor that seizes upon us with the passing of the weeks must be shaken off. The apathy that makes us dull and slow to respond to the higher inspirations, must be replaced by new life, new action, and new vigor.

How shall this awakening be accomplished? "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" exhorts the Church. In the Saviour of mankind she would have all reinvigorated. And to impress all with the seriousness of her proposal, the Church brings John the Baptist from the desert to be the preacher of her Advent message. And what a message he brings! Clad in rough garments austere and countenance prophetic of mien, and burning with zeal, he utters in stentorian tones the need of penance. He is a flaming symbol of eternal truth, uttering hard sayings, scathing in his denunciation of sin and positive in his faith of the judgment to come, a fitting antidote to the luxury, the indifference, the worldliness of his age. And well he did his work and prepared his followers by penance for the coming of Christ.

So the Church imitates the precursor and preaches the doctrine of penance in Advent. To reinforce her message, she clothes herself in the sombre garb of mourning, placing on her ministers the purple robes of penance. She bans all joyous signs, and gladsome music from her services and fills the ears of her devout worshippers with the dreadful story of the judgment to come, and the end of the world. She teaches them the salutary lesson that the flight of time since last Advent is but an instance of the fleeting years, and prepares them for the keynote of her Advent message, "salvation is nearer than we believe."

To prepare the way of Our Lord is the purpose of Advent. Three comings of Our Lord are symbolized during this holy season. His coming into the world at Christmas. His coming into our hearts in Holy Communion, and His coming at the end of the world as Judge of the living and the dead. Through the solemnity of Advent gleams the light of these three comings. Hence the reason for the term Advent which means "coming." A well spent Advent is the best preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas, for His coming into our souls in Holy Communion, and therefore for His final coming at the end of the world.—The Pilot.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Don't neglect to say your morning and night prayers, be they ever so short.

Don't forget to make your morning offering, and to renew your good intention during the day, saying frequently: "All for Thee, O Jesus, all for Thee."

Don't give up the pious practices which you have been taught to adopt, such as saying three "Hail Mary's" in honor of the Immaculate Conception, reciting the Rosary, and making an Act of Contrition at your bedside.

Don't sit down to, nor rise from your meals without saying grace. "I very strictly require thanks for all that I give," Christ to Sweet-Cheep, Im. of Christ, iii. 9.

Don't neglect to invoke the sweet names of Jesus and Mary in time of temptation.

Don't associate with any person of doubtful character, remembering that "a man's worst enemies are those who lead him into sin, his best friends those who keep him from it."

Don't frequent any places of amusement dangerous to your soul; seek your recreation, by preference, in healthy outdoor exercise.

Don't fail to join some society established in the parish in which you reside.

Don't forget to co-operate as far as possible in Catholic social works. Help the poor.

Don't be so foolishly proud as to think that you may read, without danger to your soul, all and every one of the papers, pamphlets and novels published nowadays. Be prudent. You are playing with fire.

Don't ever imitate the example of those who disgrace their Holy Religion by staying away from Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation without valid excuse, and by eating flesh meat on abstinence days.—Southern Cross.

TYRANNY OF MOODS

One of the elements which make for happiness and unhappiness in life is the vigor and persistence of moods. Will means something definite; intellect, if it is properly used, moves to certain ends; the affections are positive and real. Moods, on the other hand, are mere states of feeling; drifting fogs that arise now on one point and now on another of the landscape; changing nothing, unstable, unreal, driven away by a passing wind; and yet for the moment obscuring the view as completely as if they had destroyed it. To a great many people the mood is a finality. This it should not be permitted to become. If character is to have strength, reliability, it is the will and the intellect that must dominate.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

One day, in huckleberry time, when little Johnny Flaiks And half a dozen other boys were starting with their pails To gather berries, Johnny's pa, in talking with him said That he could tell him how to pick so he'd come out ahead.

"First find your bush," said Johnny's pa, "and stick to it till You've picked it clean. Let those go chasing about who will In search of better bushes, but it's picking tells, my son; To look at fifty bushes doesn't count like picking one."

And Johnny did as he was told, and sure enough he found By sticking to his bush while all the others chased around In search of better picking, 'twas as if his father said, "You've picked it clean, my son; To look at fifty bushes doesn't count like picking one."

And Johnny did as he was told, and sure enough he found By sticking to his bush while all the others chased around In search of better picking, 'twas as if his father said, "You've picked it clean, my son; To look at fifty bushes doesn't count like picking one."

And Johnny recollected this when he became a man, And first of all he laid him out a well-determined plan. So while the brilliant triflers failed with all their brains and push, Wise, steady-going Johnny won by "sticking to his bush."

"A DISTINCTION, NOT A DIFFERENCE"

A group of small boys, gathered under a big oak, had listened spell-bound for an hour to Uncle Enoch's tales of adventure by land and by sea, on the field of battle and in the trackless forest. At last the hero of all the adventures paused for breath, and one of the listeners ventured a single gasping question. "Uncle Enoch," he stammered, "s'pose—I s'pose you never ran away from anything in all your life, did you? Not from bears nor tigers nor cannons nor wild Indians, nor—nor anything?"

Uncle Enoch pulled his spectacles well down on his long nose and gazed benignly over them at this venturesome young person. "Benny," he said in the tone of one safely arrived at the seat of wisdom, "you live long enough an' you'll find out 'tish't ever best to run away from danger, no matter what; but you'll see times when you'll change front an' advance in the other direction 'bout as fast as you can go."

THE SQUARE DEAL

The square deal is the only method that can produce success—the success that brings happiness and life worth while and when the square deal is combined with well developed ability placed in full action the success will be great.

The principle of the square deal is not only to be earnest and reliable in a general sense, but to be so in the absolute sense; that is to aim to give an exact equivalent in every transaction and to give the highest possible worth of everything we produce and offer for sale.

The real business of the world is based upon this principle of an exact equivalent, returning worth for worth; and so necessary is this principle to the very existence of the business world that no enterprise whatever could exist if it were removed.

The man who accumulates a fortune through shady methods does not engage in real business; he simply acts as a parasite upon the reliable enterprises of other men. He would therefore starve if honest men should cease to conduct business. The parasite always does when you remove the source of his life and power.

The square deal combined with well developed ability and vim, will win every time, and its gains will be far greater when it refuses to give part of its life to keep parasites in thriving existence.—True Voice.

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RIDDLES

Why are sidewalks in winter like music? If you don't C sharp you will B flat.

What two letters express the most important people in the world? U and I.

How does the Letter Y work an impossibility? It makes a lad into a lady.

Why is the letter R a profitable letter? Because it makes ice into rice.

Why is the letter T like Easter? Because it's the last of Lent.

When does a blacksmith make a row in the alphabet? When he makes a poke-R and a Shove-L.

What seven letters did old Mother Hubbard use when she looked into the cupboard? O I C U R M T.

Why did Noah object to the letter D? Because it makes the ark dark.

Why are stars like an old barn? Because there are R A T S in both.

Make five less by adding to it? IV.

Why is the letter S like a pert repartee? Because it begins and ends in sauciness.

What small animal is turned into a larger one by beheading it? Fox—ox.

We are all frail; but see thou think no one more frail than thyself.—Thomas a Kempis.

Who is not amazed at compassion so great and mercy so surpassing, after treason so foul and so hateful.—St. Teresa.

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You shall leave all your goods and possessions at the portals of eternity. Your glory cannot descend with you to the tomb. Your pleasure shall be turned into bitterness and your love into hatred. You shall carry from this life only the good and evil you have done in it; the good, in order to be recompensed; the evil that you may be punished. That which was your pleasure during life shall be your torment after death. That which is your cross and affliction in life, shall procure you great joy after death, if you suffer for God and in God.—Crasset.

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