
The Quavering Existence of Mr. Jello (Pronounced Yell-o).

In the Religious Survey of last March, the question found most difficult to answer was, "How would you suggest that students be taught the seriousness of never really turning their hearts to God?" A large number gave unsatisfactory answers; a still larger number made no attempt to answer.

It is a hard question to answer. It was asked for two reasons: 1. to arouse thought on this fundamental problem; 2. to obtain suggestions on how to fill void heads.

There were some good answers, of course. Look them over carefully when the Survey is issued. You will find that Divine Providence has used some of them this year.

There are all kinds of reasons why the question is difficult to answer, but a too-common one is the fact that we are over-stocked with members of the Jello family. Anyone who has ever really turned his heart to God, even once, can give some kind of an answer; but these quavering, quivering, semi-liquid Jello brothers don't know what it's all about.

For Mr. Jello -- and his name is legion -- the Sacrament of Penance is a fire-escape. He goes to confession to keep out of hell: Fear! He drinks liquor that burns his throat to keep from being razzed: Fear! He plays around with the wrong company for fear he will be regarded as a weakling: Fear! He goes to the chapel and makes an Act of Contrition before he goes to bed for fear he will die in mortal sin; and on his way to bed if he hears a coarse story he tells two more for fear he will be thought slow. He goes to Holy Communion after making a purpose of amendment, and by nine o'clock in the morning he is bragging about the sins he committed during the holidays -- for fear some ass as silly as himself will call him sissy.

Has he ever really turned his heart to God? Does the Sacrament of Penance give him a new attitude towards sin? If he has a new attitude he certainly doesn't show it. If he means what he says when he tells God that he is sorry from the "bottom of his heart," his heart must be pretty shallow if it can't stir up some voluntary penance in the way of reparation. If he is really firmly resolved to avoid sin in the future, his firmness must be of a gelatinous quality if it can't last till nine a.m.

Turning one's heart to God means something very definite: it denotes a very definite first place for God and God's interests in all our attitudes and activities. Turning to God makes sin something abhorrent to our being. Making an Act of Contrition means a repudiation of sin if one has turned his heart to God. Mr. Jello, by his attitude, seems to make his Act of Contrition out of the side of his mouth, winking all the while at sin, and seeming to say, "Just a minute."

Mr. Jello's fundamental defect is lack of a sense of humor, without which he cannot see and appreciate the inconsistencies in his mental make-up. If he will pray earnestly for that perhaps God will give it, and with it the gift of prudence which will save his soul.

When Will You Next Need God?

This Novena for Health does not appeal to the imagination of the majority of you. As long as you have your own appetite you need not worry about the rest of the world -- your neighbor's afflictions will not disturb your dreams. Next week we begin the Church Unity Octave, for conversions. Neither will this reach the self-centered consciences of the selfish mob. When will you next need God? Examinations come soon.

PRAYERS: Wm. Mottz's father died December 31. A relative of Leo Fagan is very ill. Henry Frye, John and Ray Totten, and Wm. Kerrigan ask prayers for their sick mothers. Bob Dewey is ill at home. Art Gallagher's grandmother died recently. An aunt of Edward Cotter, long an invalid, is sinking. Three special intentions.