
There May Be Holies In Your Theology.

Are you sure you haven't got some funny ideas in your head? There are quite a few of them running around loose, and they seek lodgment wherever they find nobody home. More specifically, a man who is not well grounded in theological principles and schooled in facts of faith and morals, may absorb error as truth, and may draw unorthodox conclusions from assembled facts.

There are many students here who have not received the Sacraments at all this year, and there are others who have gone but seldom. We can't believe for one minute that indifference, laziness, and love for sin can account for all this neglect of grace. It is likewise beyond belief that cowardice -- fear of confession -- keeps many away; the average student here is not yellow, neither is the average below-average student. We can seek the trouble of many of them in false theological notions.

Many students failed to make the Novena before examinations because they felt it would be hypocritical to pray in adversity when they had neglected God in prosperity. To be consistent these men should refuse the Last Sacraments on the ground that fear, and love, would impel them to ask for the priest when they feared death. Fortunately, they don't; common sense prevails in major crises. But if they insist on higher motives, now is an excellent time to seek them and act upon them. Reparation is a good motive.

Other students remain away because they "know" they have no sincere purpose of amendment. No sinner should draw that conclusion without consulting a priest. There is room for damaging self-deception in such matters. There is overwhelming evidence to prove that sinners who have given up hope have come back to God and become saints. Any penitent who feels that he cannot conquer sin needs the advice of a specialist. Let him go to a priest and say that he does not want to go to confession, but needs advice; there will be no danger of a sacrilegious confession.

Another silly notion is that one cannot enjoy himself if he is a daily communicant. The implication is that mortal sin is essential to a good time. There is more truth in the contrary proposition: one cannot enjoy himself if he is not in the state of grace. Any honest Catholic of normal conscience and good sense will tell you that he does not feel comfortable in mortal sin. One's sense of humor has full play only when he is in the state of grace; his field of embarrassment is then limited. A bit of observation will show the skeptic who has the best time around Notre Dame.

Scruples are not infrequently a cause of spiritual inertia. The Catholic who is afflicted with them may decide to stay away from the Sacraments rather than face the agony they will cause the next time he goes to confession. Such a man is in the position of a patient who defers a vital operation because he dislikes the gas pains after ether. Scruples do not cure themselves, but they can be cured. The longer the cure is delayed the more difficult it becomes. A scrupulous penitent should put himself in the hands of a priest and follow his advice absolutely.

Finally, there are those who mistake emotional fervor for the essence of holiness. It seems useless to be harping on this all the time, but it is ever cropping up. These men need to know, once and for all, that true fervor consists in the avoidance of sin. The other thing may degenerate into mere sentimentality, which is not religion at all.

Prayers.

Norbin Arehart, '26, is ill with tuberculosis; C. A. Ouellette, '28, with after-effects of flu. Frank Goetz, John Blackwell, Sylvester Dougherty, and George Mangan ask prayers for deceased relatives. Larry Moeller has been called home by the death of his grandmother and the serious illness of his mother. Philip Conboy's father is undergoing an operation; a relative of Bernard Bloemer is ill. Three special intentions.