

Won't Bill Be Surprised?

About a year ago, a visiting speaker in Washington Hall related the story of his conversion. It produced such an effect on his audience that it can well be repeated for the benefit of those who did not attend.

The speaker, while a youth of 17 or 18, used to associate at times with a group of friends who occasionally indulged in coarse and filthy stories. Disapproving of these stories himself, he noticed on two or three occasions the reaction of another member of the group, Bill somebody, whom he knew only slightly. Anyway, Bill likewise showed a distaste for the stories by various signs.

His curiosity aroused, the speaker asked the others, "Why doesn't Bill laugh? Hasn't he a sense of humor?" "Oh, he has a sense of humor, all right," was the explanation, "But he's one of those Catholics and he never laughs at those jokes."

The speaker never saw Bill again — never spoke to him — but the explanation stayed in his mind with this reaction: "Bill has character, more than the rest of us. That Catholic religion can't be so bad." He finally decided that if Bill's religion motivated him so much then he wished to find out something about Catholicism, although up to that time he had had a very prejudiced attitude towards it because of the usual anti-Catholic misrepresentation.

He secured some books explaining the Catholic Faith. Months later he had a Catholic friend introduce him to a priest. After a period of study and fervent prayer, he became a Catholic.

Unknown to him, Bill was credited with one score in Heaven.

About a year and a half later the speaker entered a seminary to study for the priesthood. At this point his parents, especially his father, objected bitterly to his becoming a priest, although they had not opposed his becoming a Catholic.

Finally, after constant and zealous prayer by his seminarian son, the father withdrew his opposition, became interested in Catholicism and was received into the Church by the end of the seminarian's third year.

The mother then became more bitter, and her estrangement was a cross to her son. The son made this cross a prayer; grace finally took its effect; and the mother became a convert shortly before the young man's ordination. At his first Mass he had the supreme joy of distributing Communion to his father and mother converts.

Bill unknowingly was credited with two more scores in Heaven.

The priest, not long after ordination, was the main promoter of a Catholic radio program in his section of the country. The program, consisting of questions and answers, was directed primarily to a non-Catholic audience. Over a course of years, as the audience grew, letters written to the priest-conductor credited the program with being responsible for over a hundred converts.

Won't Bill be surprised in Heaven when he finds out just what a wallop there was in his good example by his decent attitude toward sex and purity?

PRAYERS. Deceased: Father of Frank Rehme (Al.); Great-grandmother of Bob Torrence, (Bad.); Mrs. Mary Dagnan; Mr. George Mullen; Mrs. Margaret Corrigan. Ill: Grandmother of George Ferriek (Wal.); Aunt of Bob Welly, (Al.). 5 Spec. Int.