

Remember no abstinence  
this Friday.

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Friday: Late Communion  
in Dillon until 9:30 only.

### The Meanest Man

There are many contenders for this dubious honor. Maybe it's the one who poisons dogs; or the fellow who slaps babies, or steals from a blind man...

Foremost in the group, whether you admit it or not, is the fellow with the foul mouth who teaches others to imitate him. Human nature is ever prone to sins of the flesh. It doesn't take much to excite the passions -- the double-meaning joke is never in need of a dictionary. How many serious sins against purity are started by laughter over a smutty story is something that only a confessor knows. Harmless, apparently, on the surface, they light the fires that destroy innocence. And the one who starts the fire is responsible for the damage done.

The dog-poisoner is mean beyond description. Whoever steals from the blind is the lowest of the low. What are we to say of the hired man of Satan who spreads the poison of obscenity that destroys the children of God by robbing them of their innocence? Bring a smutty magazine or book to the campus and you join Satan's legion.

### About Profanity

Recently, in Washington, the famous General Order deprecating swearing and cursing which was originally issued to the Continental Army by George Washington in 1776, was reprinted and sent to all recruiting offices and camps of the United States Army. Among other things, we find the Father of his Country saying:

"I hope the officers will by word and example endeavor to check any cursing or swearing, and that everyone in the army will realize that we can have little hope of the blessing of heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without a temptation, that every man of sense and character detests it."

These words are not from the pulpit, or from the catechism, but from one who has always been admired for the virtues that become a man. The free and easy use of profanity is not only contrary to the law of God and of decency, but it is also a very fine gauge of an individual's mental poverty in the art of self-expression. Profanity is a stupid way of carrying ourselves through a situation that is too much for our power of expression. It's not a sign of maturity - only mental poverty.

Suppose you make a check-up in this regard. True, most of you can say that you do not blaspheme, or take God's holy name in vain. But this is not sufficient. What about the other terms you use? It is an old saying that a man speaks what is in his heart. And if you were to judge yourselves as others instinctively judge you when they hear you speak vulgarly, what would you say is in your heart?

It is only a habit, of course. And of course you don't mean what you say; and so you pass over the whole matter, and lightly dismiss it from your conscience.

The only disturbing note in this sort of reasoning is that we are responsible for our bad habits -- and for the scandal and the bad example given. There's the rub -- the scandal and bad example involved!

The curbing of one's tongue would make an excellent starting point for basic Lenten mortification. How's your vocabulary, and could it stand a little scrubbing? It's a fearful thing to recall that on the Day of Judgment we shall give an account of every word uttered! There will be no laughter at our vulgar humor then. Scrub now!