

ST. JOSEPH, UNIVERSAL PATRON

Thursday, March 19, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patron of the Universal Church. And celebrate is the proper word. Even within the most solemn season of Passiontide, the Church interrupts the Lenten liturgy -- as it did only twice before during Lent (for the Feast of St. Peter's Chair and the Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle) -- to rejoice in the holiness, in the victory of the one who after Mary, the Mother of God, knew Christ Jesus most intimately. Attention is focused on St. Joseph's role as Spouse of Mary and Protector of the Universal Church -- "as of old you delivered the Child Jesus from the supreme peril of life, so now defend the Holy Church of God from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity." Yet the very thought of St. Joseph suggests other titles by which he is invoked, virtues of which he is the model, other causes of which he is the patron.

St. Joseph is the model of chastity. Lawful husband of the Mother of God, he lived a life of heroic chastity and was willing to forego his marital rights to respect the virginity of his spouse.

St. Joseph is head of the Holy Family. As such he is the model of virtue for husbands and fathers. He is invoked by those who realize the importance and necessity of entering into a happy marriage. Hence men ask his guidance in the choice of a life partner.

St. Joseph is the patron of laborers. Under the title of St. Joseph the Worker a special feast in his honor is observed on May 1.

St. Joseph is the special patron of religious vocations. Those who think they might be called to more complete dedication to the service of Christ seek help from Joseph whose life was wholly devoted to nurturing and supporting the Boy Jesus.

St. Joseph is patron of the dying since according to tradition he died in the arms of Jesus and Mary. By his happy death as well as in his virtuous life he serves as a model for all Christians.

THE IRISH IN AMERICA William V. Shannon's The American Irish* is one of the best books of the season, done with much labor and care and devotion. Mr. Shannon is a high-powered journalist who knows how to cover even so big and complicated a subject. He does it by taking particular Irishmen in America and giving us something of a biography of each man -- of Cardinal Gibbons, Cardinal O'Connell, John L Sullivan (the great fighter before the colored era in boxing), Al Smith, Joe McCarthy, Finley Peter Dunne ("Mr. Dooley"), and a vast variety of churchmen, prize fighters, poets and politicians.

The Irishman landed in America a tattered man, much more than half starved -- didn't he leave thousands behind him actually starved to death? -- looking like a bum, a man persecuted for longer than anyone but an Irishman could remember, discriminated against even in the land of his dreams. What clung to him was a bad press. Then in spite of everything, as Shannon shows so well, the Irishman quickly became domesticated in America, incardinated in it and with it. Even in the twentieth century, born Irishmen returning to Ireland for a visit say they are going home, and people in Ireland say even to those visitors whose parents and grandparents are American-born, "You're home for a holiday."

Ireland is home, and America is home, and the Irish in America are in some ways more Irish than the Irish in Ireland. Nevertheless, the great mass of Irishmen reaching America has almost to a man been quickly at home in their adopted and loved America.

One thing the Irishman would

commonly do would be to stand on the side of the people. He "came up" from the people and with the people, and at what Shannon considers the Irishman's best, the Irish leader in America -- Al Smith, John A. Ryan, "Mr. Dooley" -- would almost automatically be on the people's side. An aristocratic American is almost a contradiction in terms, and an aristocratic Irish American couldn't make any sense at all.

The Irish in America have liked power, perhaps because their forebears had so long been deprived of it. They have liked the power of oratory, of words, the gift of gab, political power, and on occasion no doubt ecclesiastical power. What Shannon does not mention is that many of them, perhaps coming too soon and immaturely into power, could not carry it and therefore tended either to go toward dictatorship or to blow up altogether.

Shannon's and everybody's ideal Irishman in America was John F. Kennedy. "The new President and his administration bodied forth in full and accurate form the three main themes of the history of the Irish in this country: the poetry, the power, and the liberalism."

--Leo R. Ward, C.S.C.
(Father Ward's second Irish book, All Over God's Irish Heaven, is off Regnery (Chicago) press today, St. Patrick's Day.)

*The Macmillan Co., 1964, \$7.95

THE BREAST-PLATE OF SAINT PATRICK

An Ancient Christian Morning Prayer

I arise today
through a mighty strength: the invocation
of the Trinity—
through belief in the Threeness,
through confession of the Oneness
towards the Creator.

I arise today
through the strength of Christ
with His Baptism,
through the strength of His Crucifixion
with His Burial,
through the strength of His Resurrection
with His Ascension,
through the strength of His Descent
for the Judgment of Doom.

I arise today
through the strength of the love of Cherubim,
in obedience of Angels,
in the service of the Archangels,
in hope of resurrection to meet with reward,
in prayers of Patriarchs,
in predictions of Prophets,
in preachings of Apostles,
in faith of Confessors,
in innocence of holy Virgins,
in deeds of righteous men.

I arise today
through the strength of the heavens:
light of Sun,
brilliance of Moon,
splendor of Fire,
speed of Lightning,
swiftness of Wind,
depth of Sea,
stability of Earth,
firmness of Rock.

I arise today
through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,

God's shield to protect me,
God's host to secure me—
against snares of devils,
against temptations of vices,
against inclinations of nature,
against everyone who shall wish me ill
afar and anear,
alone and in a crowd.

I summon today all these powers between me (and
these evils)—
against every cruel and merciless power
that may oppose my body and my soul,
against incantations of false prophets,
against black laws of heathenry,
against false laws of heretics,
against craft of idolatry,
against spells of women and smiths and
wizards,
against every knowledge that endangers
man's body and soul.

Christ to protect me today
against poison, against burning,
against drowning, against wounding,
so that there may come abundance of reward.

Christ with me, **Christ** before me,
Christ behind me, **Christ** in me,
Christ beneath me, **Christ** above me,
Christ on my right, **Christ** on my left,
Christ where I lie, **Christ** where I sit,
Christ where I arise,
Christ in the heart
of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth
of every man who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today
through a mighty strength; the invocation
of the Trinity,
through belief in the Threeness,
through confession of the Oneness
towards the Creator.

Salvation is of the Lord.
Salvation is of the Lord.
Salvation is of Christ.
May Thy salvation, O Lord, be ever with us.

"YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS"

Last October 16 The Voice printed an open letter to Gregory Waisnoras. Five months have elapsed, and perhaps many have forgotten the reason for the letter. It is reproduced in part below.

Like hundred of others, ever since you were young, you had a burning ambition and desire to become a Notre Dame man, and more specifically a doctor. There were at least a dozen campus visits and football games. You had been ranked exceptional in academic and athletic achievement. Your acceptance at Notre Dame seemed quite obvious.

It was just slightly less than a year ago that it became known you had cancer. The why and the how have baffled the physicians. The only alternative was the amputation of the leg just above the knee on March 2, 1963. Yet your dreams, your aspirations of entering Notre Dame remained unaltered. You became a freshman, September 14, 1963.

For four days you were officially a part of Notre Dame. For four days you experienced the initial joy, enthusiasm, excitement, and anxieties of a beginning frosh, but for you there was always that pain.

At the advice of physicians, you withdrew from the University. There was still the cancer. On September 23, you underwent an operation at the Illinois Research Hospital. The remainder of your leg was removed.

Greg, in you is vested another segment of what is properly regarded as the Notre Dame spirit. Your motivation, your drive to fulfill a life-long ambition has remained undaunted. You serve as a reminder to some of us on campus of another meaning for the Spirit of Notre Dame.

So Greg, as you anxiously await your recovery and then your return, we, Notre Dame, are likewise waiting for you.

Gregory Waisnoras will never return to Notre Dame. After a series of futile operations he died last Saturday morning in Chicago.

Young, full of ambition, of hope, Greg Waisnoras, by his suffering and untimely death, helps us to understand the paradox of Christianity. "He who loses his life shall find it." Greg took up his cross; on the way to his Calvary he briefly encountered Our Lady who no doubt accompanied him the rest of the way as she did her Divine Son; and he now enjoys the fullness of the new life which from his Baptism he shared with the Risen Christ.