

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN



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REV. LLOYD W. TESKE, C.S.C.,  
UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN - EDITOR

## SMUT ON OUR LADY'S FACE

*"Present day life needs to be recalled to greater human and Christian dignity in its behavior and fundamental concepts particularly since shows, public entertainment and behavior appear designed to degrade the life of man, his dignity and purity."*

These words were spoken recently by Pope Paul VI to a gathering in St. Peter's Square.

They are words that should concern every Christian. And unfortunately the condition that provoked them is close at hand.



Only last Monday evening there was a show in Stepan Center to which Pope Paul's admonition could have referred. Our immediate shepherd, Bishop Pursley of Fort Wayne-South Bend reflected the Holy Father's concern. With regard to the yellow flyer labeled "Important -- Read Carefully" he wrote, asking: "Can you tell me something about this?" The comment on the show itself by a priest whose judgment in aesthetic as well as in moral matters we respect was: "Cheap and vulgar." This same observation or similar ones were made by many of the more mature students in the audience. Evidently Bishop's questioning of the flyer was to the point.

Those who booked the program have admitted that the flyer was in poor taste. And perhaps its tone drew the type of audience that applauded every suggestion of lewdness, thus encouraging the performers to give the audience more of what it seemed to want.

This is a sad commentary on any Christian community but especially on a Christian university dedicated to Notre Dame.

There was a time, not many years ago, when a suggestive remark by a would-be comedian fell so flat at Notre Dame that the entertainer became embarrassed and tried no more of his smut. Last Monday the reception was just the opposite.

The booking of the show may have been (continued on page three)

## SPIRITUAL ADULTHOOD

Psychologists tell us that a child becomes a man when he stops taking and begins to give. A sense of responsibility for others is the basic proof of emotional maturity.

Most of us can illustrate this dictum from our own observation. We know of overprotected children who, as young adults with well paying jobs, spend most of their money on themselves. They still expect dad and mom to provide them with room and board. They may be in their twenties, yet continue to take rather than to give.

This emotional immaturity, his taking rather than giving, can be ruinous to the happiness of a marriage. It characterizes the husband (or wife) who seeks primarily his own satisfaction, whether in marital intercourse or in any other area of the partnership.

The essence of love, whether in marriage or in friendship, consists in the giving of self to the one loved. It is almost impossible for the immature person ever really to love another because he knows only how to take. To him, love is a one way street terminating in himself.

### Spiritual Immaturity

We can see this readily enough in the relationship of human to human. Perhaps it has not occurred to us that this also is true of man's relationship to God. There is such a thing as being spiritually immature. The mark of this immaturity is, once again, the habit of taking rather than giving.

There are many people ("good" people, too, we would say) who see the sacraments and prayer solely as instruments for their own sanctification, with hardly any advertence to the "giving" aspect of genuine religion.

To the immature Christian, baptism is simply the sacrament by which his own soul is cleansed from original sin and made fit for heaven. He does not recognize that baptism has made him a member of Christ, with the obligation to work with Christ for the redemption of others.

The immature Christian sees the Holy Eucharist only as the sacrament by which his own soul grows in grace. He does not realize, as he kneels at the Communion rail, that this is the sacrament of unity which makes him doubly responsible for his neighbor. He does not realize that he must be a channel of grace to others, not a mere receptacle of grace for himself.

The sacrifice of the Mass, to the immature Christian, is a pipeline to heaven. Into the pipeline he loads all his petitions, usually for temporal favors, and from the pipeline he expects to draw

the answers to his requests. He does not understand that the Mass is primarily our gift to God - the Gift of ourselves, our will and whole being, in union with Christ to the Father.

### Compartmentalized Religion

The immature Christian keeps his religion in a tidy compartment of its own, quite securely separated from everyday affairs. He aims to maintain a cozy You-me relationship with God. As for his relationships with other people, he keeps those on a strictly practical basis, not on the basis of a brother's need and his own ability to help. He helps those who cannot be expected to help him in return. Others must look out for themselves. He is not his brother's keeper.

There are too many immature Christians in the Church. That is why Christ has been so sorely hindered in His efforts to transform the world. That is why, after 2,000 years, we still have so much poverty and ignorance, so much hatred and so many wars. Like an inept player on a football team, the immature Christian stands in Christ's way instead of running interference for Him.

Up to this point we have been talking rather impersonally. The immature Christian is a shadowy person. He is that man or woman across the street, that fellow or girl at the next desk or machine.

Maybe. Also maybe it is that person whom I see in the mirror. There may be an awakening in store for me if I ask myself and answer in complete honesty, "In my spiritual life, as I live it day by day, am I a giver or am I a taker?"

- by Fr. Leo J. Trese

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### SMUT AT NOTRE DAME (continued from the front page)

one of the mistakes that seem inevitable with the greater assertion of student freedom, but responsible leadership will not permit a similar mistake to take place again. And responsibility among all students will put in their place entertainers who "degrade the life of man, his dignity and his purity."

#### IN THE SPIRIT OF ECUMENISM

The Pope John XXIII Lecture Series will present the Reverend Gyodo Kono, a Buddhist priest, in a talk entitled "The Great Dichotomy: Buddhism and Christianity." The lecture is scheduled for the Memorial Library Auditorium on Monday, February 22, 1965 at 8:00 p.m.

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IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the following: Ill -- Lawrence Kellerman of St. Ed's last semester, forced to leave school for reasons of health; wife of Walt Jaworski, supervisor of maintenance. Deceased -- father of Mike Zika of Dillon; Harry Stuhldreher, '25; Allan J. Clark, '43. Special Intention of Bill Toms of Dillon.

For Freshmen Only.....

SUNDAY SCANDAL

You were shocked. You are shocked. But actually you haven't been realistic. You came to Notre Dame expecting all the students to be (more or less) dedicated to the Christian Life. This gilded, unrealistic image has been shattered. You have found fellows in the hall or on your floor who don't go to Mass on Sunday. And your confusion is increased when you hear them brag about it and even complain that when they were home at Christmas: "The 'Old Lady' made me go." You become more bewildered each Sunday by the large number who saunter in at the Sermon and blast-out at the Communion, and while they are there they couldn't be less interested as they hug the back wall in mortal fear that they might possibly get far enough "in" to be infected by God.

You have been horribly unrealistic. You shouldn't be shocked. This is "par-for-the-course" for Christianity. The Church, the Bride of Christ, is soiled, tainted and sinful because of all of us who refuse to make a total response of YES to God's invitation to live a life of love. This has always been and will continue till the end of time.

The fellows who don't go to Sunday Mass or merely make a token appearance are fighting a fierce battle deep within themselves for independence or they are being held captive by their own selfish instincts. They have yet to realize that only through personal commitment as a Christian will they be set free. Mass, for them is just another symbol of a kind of submission they can't tolerate. It's unfortunate (especially for well-educated students) that they have so totally missed the message of Christianity. Because for a Christian it is the most natural thing in the world to say: "Thank you", "I'm sorry", and "Please help me",, to his good and generous Father. This he does at Mass. But God, for many students, is not a loving Father but an impersonal tyrant with a spiritual computer and an invisible switch to beat them with.

The obvious failure of some students to grasp the core of the Christian message is doubly sad because of the scandal they give to the rest of us. But try to be realistic -- there will always be people who will not let their inherent selfishness be burned-up in the fire of God's love. Don't be shocked but try in your own lives to cleanse away some of the stains and sins which are soiling Christ's Bride, the Church --- which is you and me.

-- Father Baker, C.S.C.

P.S. "It must needs be that scandals come, but woe to the man through whom scandal does come." Mt. 18,7