

Prayers.

Five special intentions, three deceased persons, and seven who are ~~all are recommended~~

Brownson Hall Oracles.

The last item on yesterday's Bulletin provoked quite a discussion on Brownson Hall. "Where does he get that stuff? I bet he was never in a public dance hall in his life." "Yeh, they crab about you marrying Protestant girls and then they never give you a chance to meet a St. Mary's girl or any Catholic girls." "I've met some peachy dames at the Palais."

There will always be those who know more than their teachers, and too many of them have parents who have not the sound judgment of Mike Rafferty, Sr. When Mike, Jr., reached the sixth grade his father took him out of school because he knew more than the teachers and sure there was no sense in paying out good money for more education when there was nothing more for him to learn.

Dr. Fosdick's Confessional.

The New York Times for February 8 credits Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of the Rockefeller Church, with the following declarations at a meeting of the Church Federation:

"Our Roman Catholic brethren in keeping the confessional have pretty nearly wiped us off the stage in one feature of human service. Through the confessional they have built up an amazing service for the treatment of sick souls. A good priest, through the confessional, can develop a treatment for the individual and we have nothing to compare with it

"For six years I have conducted, Baptist though I am, what I call a confessional. I am not afraid to recover things the Protestants threw away -- beauty of service and the confessional. I have an office where people who know they are spiritually sick and mentally disturbed can come with their problems. Why shouldn't I minister to them? Never again will I be without such a place where people can meet me alone. Week after week I meet pretty nearly as many people as a priest. They are mentally unbalanced -- sick souls who need ministrations."

Now, Dr. Fosdick, let's get this straight. You may think you have a confessional, but you haven't. You may give your people medicine, but you can't give them absolution. Our Lord never said to you, either directly or through a successor of one of the Apostles: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." You can't say, "Ego te absolvo," and have it ratified in heaven. And although in your office you may see almost as many people as a priest, you could have ten times as many penitents if they could have the concealment of a box where they are not known, a sacramental seal to defend their secrets with life itself, and an assuring word of forgiveness from one with divine power to forgive.

The trouble with you, Dr. Fosdick, and with the psychoanalysts and Ben Lindsey, is that you don't give the supernatural any show at all. Now we know all about the natural, and we have natural effects in the confessional and prayer and liturgy and in a thousand different things. But we know something about the supernatural as well. We know, for instance, that when we asked 758 boys last year to state what had helped them in temptations, they came back with 1100 suggestions, and 73% of these suggestions were of supernatural means, with prayer and Holy Communion in the lead. You and Ben and Dr. Harris and a few more "confessionalists" may have the personality to draw out a story and speak a word of comfort; we have 25,000 real confessors in this country, and they can forgive as well as comfort. You are still a long way from our secret.