

"I Can't Go to Confession."

You hear that every now and then, on the campus or down town, particularly the latter. Why not? Be fortified to meet the objections:

1. "I know I am going to sin again."

If he means that he intends to commit mortal sin, you can try to dissuade him from it, and can pray for him; but he will be in a bad way if he gets knocked off in that state. -- On the other hand, if he means that he knows by past experience that under a new temptation he is pretty sure to fall, you can do a lot for him. He does not know for sure, because he may not live to commit another sin; he does know that there is always an end to sin, and he can make up his mind to use the grace of God to make sin end now; he knows that the grace of God can do for him what it has done for others. If he will here and now is determined to avoid sin for the future, it makes no difference what his judgment tells him about past weakness. He can go to confession.

2. "I can't be sorry for my sins."

Perhaps so. If there has been much malice in past sins and he has done little or no penance for them, if he has been guilty of sacrilege, of gross neglect of the precepts of the Church, of reading books on the Index, of murder, of oppression of the poor, of similar acts of hard-heartedness, he cannot expect to kneel down and make an act of perfect contrition in five minutes. Presumption hardens the heart, and it can be softened only by beating it into submission; it was for such cases that the Church used public penances in the old days. Newman's "Neglect of Divine Calls and Warnings" and "Mental Sufferings of Our Lord in the Passion" treat of presumption and of the malice of sin; they help to bring on the proper state of compunction.

3. "I lack the nerve."

It takes more nerve to sin than it does to tell a priest about it, if one has a right mind about God. If this fellow knew that he were going to die within half an hour his nerve would come right back; death is a very good cure for silly pride. He can go to confession in the dark at night in the Sorin chapel if he wants to; he needs only to ring the bell. If he lacks the nerve to go straight after bragging about what a tough guy he is, he should reflect that his he-man companions can't help him on his death-bed.

4. "I hate to tell the same sins over and over again."

Change the tune. Let him ask the priest for suggestions on how to do this. Extra-confessional advice is especially helpful for stubborn faults, as it gives the priest an opportunity to study the character of the penitent and prescribe the remedies most suited to his case.

5. "It won't do me a bit of good."

That is as silly as its twin argument, "You can't drive religion into me." Both of these are excuses to go on sinning. You can't make a bird of paradise out of an ostrich. If a man insists on sinning, one excuse is as good as another.

A Roof for the Lepers' Hut.

Offerings of twenty dollars for the lepers since the last report have brought the hut near completion. Thirty dollars and seventy-five cents will make it an even hundred.

Prayers.

Five special intentions and three sick persons are recommended to your prayers. Fr. Ryan's mother is very low. Vincent Soisson, a recent alumnus, asks prayers for his sick mother.