
Do You Realize What You Have?

We Catholics take so much for granted. The things the Church gives us are so much a part of us that we fail to realize what we might be without them. That is one of the reasons why Catholics do so little for their non-Catholic neighbors; secure in the helps they have always known, they do not know what others are missing.

The confessional has come in for a good bit of discussion among non-Catholics of late, and we can thank God that instead of the bogey it was to the Protestants of a decade or two ago, it is beginning to seem to them what Our Lord intended it should be, the great refuge of the troubled heart. Dr. Slade, Congregational minister of the South Church, in Chicago, has recently inaugurated five "soul clinics," one of which, the "clinic for personal problems," he calls the Protestant confessional. The pity of it is that with Protestants the baring of the soul for comfort cannot be followed by the comfortin grace of absolution which wipes out the sins.

The Ave Maria for October 26 quotes for us the words of a Protestant Episcopal minister of New York, Rev. Arthur P.S. Hyde, in tribute to the confessional:

"Perhaps the most potent reason for the comparative failure of those parts of Christendom that have given up the confessional to hold their followers to the obligations of Christian living is to be found in attempting to deal with mankind in the mass. On the other hand, through the confessional, the pastor deals with each individual soul and its own particular needs.

"Imagine, for example, the chief physician of a hospital or a clinic, assembling in one place all the patients who felt inclined to come voluntarily, and then lecturing them in general terms on some aspect of hygiene, or perhaps some topic of the day, having little or no relationship to the health of his hearers -- and then expect to find the thing needful for each, although they are possessed of little or no training in such matters!

"Let us not continue to make a bogey of the confessional, as, unhappily, many have done. Let us realize just a few fundamental facts. First, that sin is a disease of the soul. Secondly, that while some sins may be overcome by personal endeavor, others need a physician of the soul; in other words, one's pastor. Thirdly, that the pastor is trained and experienced in dealing with just such matters. And lastly, that cases can be treated only by personal contact, with a full and complete unburdening of the soul."

What a pity all Catholics do not realize fully what they have. What a pity there is so much neglect of opportunities at Notre Dame. Yesterday morning there were 1738 Holy Communions -- and there might have been 1000 more. And let us not disguise the fact that lots of them were kept away, not by broken fasts, but by lack of appreciation of the Sacrament of Penance. How do we know that? Because among the thousand who stayed away were many who have not attended the Sacraments this fall because they are afraid to take the medicine that will cure their souls. That is plain speech, but it is justified by experience.

Poor Souls Indulgences.

Start now to make a list of the deceased relatives and friends for whom you wish to gain the indulgences granted next Friday and Saturday. Remember that you can gain a plenary indulgence for every visit you make to the church or the ahll chapels those two days, provided you receive the Sacraments and pray each visit for the intentions of the Holy Father.

PRAYERS: Louis Amistoy's mother, deceased; Anthony Brick's mother, ill.