

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
April 9, 1932.

Questions From the Questionnaire.

As in previous years, the Religious Bulletin will attempt to give reasonable answers to reasonable questions submitted through the medium of the Religious Survey questionnaire. Among the questions submitted are many which should be asked in confession or in private conference; these will be ignored here, but the questioners are requested to make their wants known in the manner indicated.

1. Do you think there was ever a real atheist?

Ans. Not an honest, intelligent one. People who claim to be atheists either can't think, or won't think, far enough.

2. Why should we accept things on faith?

Ans. Because there are things too big for our understanding, but which God is good enough to reveal to us for our comfort and our inspiration. If we feel that our minds are vast enough to understand everything they are small indeed, for they cannot comprehend even their own insufficiency.

3. How many Notre Dame men marry South Bend girls?

Ans. That's a nice question. Perhaps the County Clerk in St. Joseph Co. and a few of the adjoining counties will let you look over the books for the past twenty years; that would furnish interesting and fairly accurate data. The general impression is that the percentage is infinitesimally small. That's why a lot of smart girls in South Bend do not care to meet Notre Dame students.

4. Is birth control an economic question?

Ans. It is primarily a moral question. Man makes it an economic question by ignoring the moral law. Chesterton's answer is this: If you find that the number of heads is smaller than the number of hats, you don't cut off heads until there are enough hats to go around; you make more hats. God clothes the lilies of the field and feeds the birds of the air. Capital has ignored the living wage; labor has made the auto and the radio more important than babies. But look over the field of birth controllers and you will find that most of the offenders use the economic argument as a defense for the false principle, but not as a defense for their own personal selfishness.

5. Why does one become religiously stale at times? Is the cure a lay-off?

Ans. Man has a body as well as a soul, and the body wars against the spirit, seeking to drag it down. The cure lies not in a lay-off to await an emotional upheaval (religion is not an emotion), but in regularity in spiritual reading, meditation, and other spiritual exercises. Consultation helps greatly; so does the advice given in St. Francis de Sales' "Introduction to a Devout Life." Call for a copy.

6. Why are prayers put in prayer books for priests, the Pope, and so forth? Wouldn't it be better to pray for missionaries or pagans?

Ans. You have a duty in justice to pray for your superiors (God knows they need prayers - we have St. Paul's word for that); you have a duty in charity to pray for pagans and their missionary friends. Good prayer books contain prayers for both intentions.

7. I believe that 90% of Notre Dame students do not believe they are having a good time without being drunk. Over half of those who made pledges broke them.

Ans. You can't name thirty fellows in your own hall who have ever been drunk in their lives - and that isn't even 25%. A thousand fellows took the pledge here this winter; you can't name thirty in the whole school who broke them. Those are the sweeping generalizations that make people mistrust your judgment when they come to know the facts - but which do infinite harm meanwhile with the thoughtless.

PRAYERS: Deceased: An uncle of Bob Colgan. Ill: Ray Boyle's mother; Wm. Minardo's father and mother; Chas. Schwartzel's grandfather. Five special intentions.