

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
May 19, 1932

Questions From The Questionnaire

141. How does one know when he has a religious calling?

Answer: When he is convinced that for him personally the religious life is the best place to give glory to God, save his soul, and help his neighbor attain salvation. If he is not entirely convinced, let him go ahead as if he were, ordering his daily life towards entrance into a novitiate. If this experiment results in a stronger attraction for the life, he can move on safely towards conviction in the matter; if, on the other hand, the idea becomes repellant, let it drop.

142. To what extent is swearing not sinful?

Answer: There is always sinful *matter* in swearing, cursing, blaspheming, and taking God's name in vain. The other two conditions for sin are advertence of the intellect and consent of the will. The man who breaks the Second Commandment through habit does not usually advert to what he is doing. However, he is responsible for the habit, and if he makes no effort to correct the habit he is guilty of everything that comes of the habit. If he is seriously trying to correct the habit he is not responsible for individual slips. — If he is serious about it, he will fine himself for every slip. How many do that?

143. Is it a sin to go to a Protestant church with a friend?

Answer: Unless for a serious social reason, such as a wedding or a funeral, it is a mortal sin for a Catholic to attend Protestant services. There is formal participation in heretical worship if one takes active part in the services; there is a fostering of the principle of indifference if one simply sits there without taking active part in the service. The principle of indifference is that 'it makes no difference what you believe provided you do what is right.' Christ told us how to worship God and what to believe in order to know and do what is right. The Church holds nothing against any Protestant who follows his conscience and in good faith follows his own notions of worship, but she cannot permit a Catholic to compromise her position that such worship is contrary to the command of Christ.

144. What should you tell in confession?

Answer: Your sins. If you don't know what constitutes sin, apply to a priest for some catechism instruction. Your confession of sins lacks completeness if you do not state the number of your mortal sins and the circumstances which would change the nature of the sin. If you are in doubt about the circumstances of certain sins, ask your confessor about it.

145. What are the best guards against temptation?

Answer: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Keep watch over your senses. A military commander posts sentries to protect his camp against surprise.

146. Why doesn't the Church publish a book about the Popes and state clearly their faults, if any, and offer no excuses for them? We seldom read of these; they are merely hinted at.

Answer: Boy, what a prospect you would have made for the university the Ku Klux Klan tried to buy some ten years ago! — But if you really are interested in the history of the papacy, and are not merely a scandal-monger, read Ludwig Pastor's History of the Popes. It is the last word in historical scholarship, since its author was the first historian of the papacy to have access to the Vatican archives. It is a noble work. Most of it will be over your head, but it will help to broaden your vision. (You will have a long week ahead of you when you tackle it.)

147. Why do Catholic schools have a lower moral standard?

Answer: Lower than what? Man, you have a lot to learn.

148. Give the arguments pro and con on free will.

Answer: A fellow who doesn't believe in free will has no business out of jail. There is no telling when he will get a compulsion that will menace society.

149. What is the Catholic attitude on capital punishment?

Answer: Read the Mosaic Law if you want to find the God-given authority for capital punishment. It was the divine sanction for a great many points of law in the old testament. It is still an effective deterrent to crime in countries where it is enforced rigidly, as in England.

PRAYERS: Tom Behan asks prayers for a deceased cousin, Joseph Burch for an aunt and a friend, both recently deceased, and Marchy Schwartz for a deceased friend. Four special intentions.

Novena For Exams Began Today