

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
January 11, 1933

A Poet Reads A Bulletin; A Philosopher Climbs A Mountain.

"Dear Father: The text you quoted in the holiday number of the Bulletin about God withholding knowledge and wisdom from the exalted and giving it to the little ones - came to mind yesterday when we spent a couple of hours on a snow-capped peak.

"Perpetual snow! The hoary heads and white-mantled shoulders of such peaks, high above the world, unaffected by any change of weather, unmindful of wind and storm, seem placidly lost in contemplation of the heavens. The ruff of soft white clouds quite shuts them off from view below, wrapping their glistening foreheads in misty veils which they seem to penetrate as they condense the vapor, which falls as snow upon their hoods.

"While their own lofty rock remains cold, frozen and dry, barren beyond description, the sun, warming the outer fringe of their capes, sends little streams of water trickling down to the valley far below where the humble farmer catches it for his greedy, sun-parched acres which, with arduous toil but inward peace, bring forth 'good fruit.'

"In these snow-capped peaks I see the abstract scientists who are too 'intelligent' to believe in God, but whose vast knowledge, good in itself and beautiful, fails to penetrate to their own cold hearts. These remain barren of any fruit acceptable to God. Yet that which trickles down from their mantles (the sweat, as it were, of their labors) is put to good use by the humble folk in the valley, and their lowly hearts, sun-warmed with charity, bring forth good fruits.

"And what is the reward of these two labors? 'He hath filled the needy with good things, and the rich He hath sent away empty.' The humble workers in the valley are finally lifted up beyond even the pinnacle of the scientist into that heaven which seems so near to the vastly-knowing one. The one sees only the cold stars in their earthly relation, their mathematical orbits; the other sees the Star of stars, warm and filling. The humble man sees the Star of Bethlehem; the scientist sees Pluto. And as a fitting after-climax, how often are that beautiful cap and mantle destroyed by the liquid fires of Pluto's kingdom!

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"St. Augustine has a beautiful thought on humility in his sermon on that text about the blindness of the Pharisees, the Doctors of Israel. He says, speaking of the ignorant fishermen who were the Apostles and disciples of Christ, and who later spoke and wrote out of supernatural knowledge and wisdom: 'As was fitting, empty vessels were brought to such a copious fountain.'"

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Thus far the poet. Draw your own practical conclusions. Don't complain that God has not answered your prayers. Look into your own heart, and ask yourself these questions: 1. Is my request really for the best? 2. Am I not preventing the answer by refusing to give up some earthly attraction that stands in the way of an answer? 3. Is my request humble, or am I rather trying to dictate to God what is best for me, matching my own little mite of wisdom with His Infinity? 4. Am I really cooperating with grace - working as well as praying - or am I asking God to do it all?

Take Time For Thanksgiving.

On the Religious Survey last March one-third of the students acknowledged that they were not in the habit of making a proper thanksgiving after Holy Communion. This is a condition that calls for serious reflection; it is only reflection that can remedy it. At the door of your hall chapel there is probably a sign calling your attention to the law of the Church on the matter (if there isn't one there, call at this office for one to post).

PRAYERS: Jack Delaney's mother is quite ill; an aunt of Joe Prendergast is ill; the father of Robert Goodwillie, former student, is seriously ill. 3 special intentions.