
From The Conversation Of A Sophomore.

This sounds like patent-medicine stuff; but it isn't. Three months ago a priest-friend spoke to me like this. You're good-hearted, he said, but you're spineless. All your life you've had what you wanted--the clothes you like and the food that suits your taste. You're fussy about your companions. If anyone galls you, you keep away from him. Without knowing, your parents 'babied' you.

You've never been sick. You've never known real poverty. You've never been in danger. You're too colorless a fellow to get a punch on the nose. You live as if everybody in the world exists to be at your service and to make you happy. Under the slightest difficulty you gripe.

Here and there, you like to think, there was a toothache, or a brief illness, or a 'sharp' correction by your Dad. And you fancy that, from these petty experiences, you know hardship. But you don't. Your life is an unbroken history of self-indulgence. No wonder your will's weak. No wonder you have moral troubles. Self-indulgence is nice, but it has this weakness: it's a poor conditioner of the will, just as cream puffs are poor conditioners of the athlete.

I can tell you something that will help you, but I doubt that you'll take me seriously. What I say won't be startling, and you'll let it slip. Or you'll postpone its adoption until you 'forget.'

Our Lord enunciated this indispensable principle: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself." And St. Paul practised the principle and preached it to his followers: "Mortify your members...but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live." Since St. Paul every single ascetic has found the principle an invaluable secret of personal progress. Outside the Church, men like William James, famous psychologist, make it the cardinal point in the development of personal power. It meant much to Christ and to St. Paul. It meant much to William James. But it may mean very little to you.

PRAYERS: (deceased) father of John Fox (How.); mother of Brother Meinrad; brother-in-law of Prof. Horan; aunt of William Kennedy; father of Hugh ('34) and Francis ('32) Murphy; grandmother of Arthur Davis (Mor.). Ill, Dick Denahy (Dil.), appendectomy; Tom Higgins (Sor.), appendectomy; father of Bernie Leahey; Sister Mary Genevieve, O.S.U.

Here is a practical statement of the principle: Every day of your life, do something (positive) that is repugnant to you; give up something (negative) that you would very much enjoy. Every day. Examples? If it is repugnant for you to get up in the morning, get up for that reason. If you would relish this juicy piece of pie, and it is on the plate before you, give it up. That's all--besides this: Find a way to work out the principle as soon as you leave me, or you'll probably never work it out.

I had heard all that before--old stuff; but in desperation at the time I began to put it to work. And after three months at it, I begin to suspect that I am a man. I can control myself in my worst temptation. And outside of that, just what is it to be a man?

A Perk-up From Peoria.

The Notre Dame Club of that enterprising Illinois City has announced a novena to the Blessed Virgin, starting May 15, and concluding on Sunday, May 23. The announced intention of the novena is the establishment of principles of justice and peace in a world of unrest.

It is planned that the members of this club will receive Holy Communion at their respective churches through the first eight days of the novena, and will gather on the last day at St. Mark's Church, where a Notre Dame alumnus, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. J. Burke, is pastor.

Spiritual enterprise of this sort is most encouraging to the University. It makes a Prefect of Religion feel that his work is decidedly worthwhile. There are plenty of times when the black pall of discouragement makes a priest wonder if the world is worth saving. The example of these Peoria alumni dispels fog. The Religious Bulletin asks God's blessing on this fine spiritual undertaking and hopes the response of the Peoria alumni will be 100 per cent.