

"Christian Marriage" by
Father Frank Cavanaugh
will be discussed at...

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
December 3, 1938

the meeting of the
Third Order, 7:45
Dillon, Mon. night.

Not Primrose.

Some of you agreed with the Bulletin's "Jitterbug Jam." Others dissented. Most dissenters were courteous. A few wrote bitter anonymous letters. Sometimes anonymous letters keep geniuses modest. But these particular letters did not smoke-screen any giants of intellect. If the authors will take the trouble to come around, they can have their mistakes in spelling and wretched grammar corrected.

One of last year's grads, a native of Baltimore, writes us a worthwhile letter and encloses a sane editorial clipped from the Evening Sun. This is the letter:

The recent articles in the Religious Bulletin and the Ave Maria attacking jitter-dances have been drawing quite a bit of favorable comment from the Eastern papers.

Last night the Baltimore Evening Sun editorialized on the subject. The editorial is enclosed.

I am receiving this year's Religious Bulletin by mail. I appreciate it even more than I did when I was at school. Keep up the good work.

The editorial, entitled "Not Primrose," follows:

Being unable to qualify as an expert on morals, The Evening Sun has no comment to make on the ethical soundness of the assault on jitterbug dances made by the Notre Dame student weekly. But as the possessor of some slight acquaintance with horticulture we question the aptness of the assertion that swing music and jitterbug dances are "wooing our youth along the primrose path to hell."

The questionable word is "primrose." We are definitely persuaded that whatever the jitterbug path may be, it is not a primrose path. A wild poppy path it might be, or a crimson Rambler path, or a scarlet sage path, but never primrose.

It is true that Frimula is a large family, appearing in a bewildering variety of shapes and colors; but under every guise it is marked by two characteristics removed as far as possible from swing music, to wit, modesty and delicacy. Swing has qualities that give it high survival value. It has vigor, flexibility, vitality and, as an expression of certain phases of modern life, sincerity. Possibly it may be destined to serve as a plant bed for noble music in the future. Yet its warmest advocate will hardly claim for it that it is either modest or delicate. The primrose is both.

True it is that the "primrose path" is an idiom without horticultural significance; but it is a bad idiom to employ in this connection, because it forces an unnatural connection between the blatant and the charming, which is a gross error in style.

Thank you, editorial writer of the Baltimore Evening Sun. You may succeed where the Bulletin has failed, namely in convincing some of our local jitterbug boys that perhaps there is something a little indelicate and immodest and offensive to the sacredness of the human person in this latest form of the modern dance. If you were an expert on morals, perhaps you could have answered our anonymous correspondent's questions:

1. "Just what is the degeneration and demoralization effected by the hot trumpet? I have yet to hear of thieving, murder or insanity caused by the modern dance."
2. "If we want to change our dance floors into gyms, why not let us? What is the well-founded objection to taking our exercise at night with music? Personally I am willing and ready to become Notre Dame's Hot Club President." (Try it.)

PRAYERS: (deceased) friend of Larry Ryan (Mor.). Ill, brother of Jack Hagerty (Walsh).