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For Reparation And Preparation - Lent.

Reports from the fronts say things are going badly. It's the old story of the United Nations being unprepared. But there is a greater unpreparedness that is horrible to contemplate for any N. D. man, for any soul, horrible and irreparable because eternal. Fr. James Gillis, C.S.P., in his Catholic News column, stresses this in these words:

"...the principal horror of war is not even the possibility of the defeat of the right and the triumph of tyranny. To the saints, and to those who look at all things in the light of eternal consequences, the principal evil of war is the death on battlefields of soldiers who go before God in the state of mortal sin.

"There are, of course, soldiers who would sin anywhere and in any circumstances. Some also who may sin less or not at all in barracks who would sin at home. Some who resist the temptations both of barracks and of cities to which the boys from the barracks go for recreation. But ever since the Spanish-American War (in which, by the way, we had too few chaplains) I have been impressed - perhaps it will not sound pharisaical to say, horrified - at the report of recklessness and demoralization in the armies at the front of young fellows who had been decent and religious at home.

"I cannot but be aware that certain people, even some Catholics, will call this feeling morbid. They seem to think, with a certain class of theological theorists in France during the last war, that if a man dies bravely in battle for the right or even for what he thinks to be the right, his sins are automatically cancelled. In effect, those theorists seemed to say that to die in battle for a good cause is to be a martyr. That theory will not stand. If a soldier carouses the night before a battle, breaks the Commandments of God and dies in battle without sacramental absolution or without perfect contrition, we dare not say that by the very act of dying he is forgiven.

"The horror of war - principal horror for those who look at war, as they look at all things else, with the eyes of faith - is the thought that so many who have lived a clean pure Godly life at home, go wild in the army and in no condition to meet their Judge go suddenly out of this world."

Lent is coming. For seniors and juniors especially, it's your last and best chance for reparation for the past and for preparation - for strengthening yourself against the hardships, the temptations and tendencies that inevitably come with army life and its stress. Be honest. Be a realist. Make a good Lent. You'll be unafraid of anything, prepared for everything.

Whose Fault?

If you were a wealthy young man, the sole support of your family, would you give your two brothers the same amount of your wealth when they approached you for a gift? No matter how kind and lavish you were with your hard-earned wealth, you would certainly give more to the brother who showed you greater love, respect and obedience.

So with Christ, our Brother in Holy Communion. Christ does not give the same amount of grace to each of us, His brothers, who receive Him in Holy Communion. To the brothers who love and obey Him more, He gives more strengthening grace, more help in the practice of virtue, more actual graces for future difficulties.

Therefore, you who think that Holy Communion does you little good, look to your love and fervor at the time of reception. If you spend only five minutes in preparation and thanksgiving, you are expressing little love for Christ. If this has been your practice over a period of frequent Communion, then you are to be blamed for your little progress, not Christ. Your little love for Christ prevents grace from flowing in the amounts you need to overcome your weaknesses. Spend fifteen minutes in preparation and thanksgiving and watch the difference in your growth of virtue.