

Prayers: operation, Rev.
Jos. Sheeran; ill, friend
of Tom Murray; John. . .

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. . Kazmierski; father of
Bob Schampier (Wal); Don
Burkhart; John Riva (Cav.)

"Blessed Are The Merciful: For They Shall Obtain Mercy."

If you are free this afternoon or tonight drop into Corby chapel to see Father Schulte. Since classes began you have been praying for him. Saturday morning after several months of a serious and painful illness, he died, still a young priest.

Father Schulte was generous enough to ask God that he might suffer; courageous enough to accept it when God granted his request. That was just like him--this kindly, merciful priest.

Father Fred Schulte, born in Detroit, 1902, was ordained in 1931. From that date until 1946 he was a member of the Holy Cross Mission Band. Fourteen years he preached parochial missions, conducted retreats, literally hearing thousands upon thousands of confessions. In 1946 he was appointed pastor of Holy Cross Church, South Bend, but his self-appointed, personal apostolate of kindness and mercy never abated.

Always Father Schulte made unlimited allowance for human frailty and good will, took a lot of penance and worries of penitents upon himself. Many a penitent he lifted out of the depths of sin, many others with uneasy consciences he calmed, and gave all who confessed to him the peaceful assurance that all was well--this is the fruit of a humble confession and a sympathetic, understanding confessor.

St. Thomas remarks somewhere that "some withdraw themselves from works of mercy lest they be involved in other people's misery." Not Father Schulte. Not by doing this would he find happiness in his priestly work, but by doing just the opposite, by being merciful, by projecting himself into the troubled hearts of the children of God.

Why single out mercifulness above all other of his virtuous qualities? Because mercifulness is so characteristic of godliness. Mercy is God's own response to our misery. Misery loves company, it is said; but what can compare to the comfort of a merciful heart.

Mercy is a direct repudiation of the spirit of the World, of its cold, selfish struggle for my rights, my comfort, my ease, my enjoyment, my self-will, my "what am I going to get out of this?" It is true we need justice, because peace is the work of justice; but we also need mercy, because mercy goes beyond the strict demands of justice and makes life with one another more livable, much more enjoyable.

Death is the last and greatest crisis. None can escape it. Ignore it, if you will; don't talk about it, don't preach about it--but some day come it must. Death is not the end; it is the beginning of life. The grace of God is the seed of glory. Living in the state of grace is already to begin our life in God.

Father Schulte died a holy death. With confidence and hope he watched its sure steps walk with measured strides, steadily, inexorably toward him. But he was unafraid. When asked by a priest, not one week ago, how he felt, he smiled, "I feel wonderful; I have never been so happy in all my life."

Pray God that we meet death as Father Schulte met it, with a smile of welcome, with the calm joy that is the warm heart of trust in God's wonderful mercy. He knew what awaited him. Surely he knew that that mercy so characteristic of his priestly life would give him unwavering confidence in the substance of the things he prayed for; the mercy of God and the Beatific Vision.

Let us too learn to follow our Lord in His mission of mercy in our own dealings with others. May we learn this lesson well. The beatitude of living, the beatitude of ~~living~~, the beatitude of ~~life~~ everlasting rests firmly but ~~mercifully~~ on our Lord's ~~assur-~~ing promise: "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."