



THE LAY CARDINALS

Do you have an itching to straighten out your pastor, your parish, or the Church in general? Then put on a red hat and call yourself the "Cardinal" because

You will find lay cardinals in every parish. They correspond to what Rockne used to call his "Board of Strategy."

Like the Roman Cardinals, they are not of Divine origin. Unlike the Roman Cardinals, they are self-appointed.

The Cardinals meet the Holy Father face-to-face and give him advice when they are asked for it. The lay cardinals give their advice to the parish priest on their own initiative, and usually behind his back.

The lay cardinals attend the children's Mass (which is quite fitting, in a way), and when the parish priest calls this to their attention, they say that his spirit is not Christ-like.

They never read the parish bulletin -- but insist on calling the rectory at all hours. This custom reaches new heights on Christmas Eve when they call to inquire what time Midnight Mass will begin.

They object to the way the pastor spends the money they don't contribute; they call him mercenary when he lays before them the parish needs that would not exist if they did their share of contributing.

They eat meat at a Friday banquet so as not to embarrass the Masons to the right and to the left of them; but when the Pope dispenses the whole Church on a holyday of obligation they say religion is going to the dogs.

They speak a good word for their pastor only when he has ceased to be their pastor, and his name and fame are brought into the conversation to the disparagement of their present shepherd.

When they receive Holy Communion it is with the Young Ladies' Sodality instead of the Holy Name Society; when they come for confession it is five minutes after closing time; when they take a notion for the Last Sacraments it is at two o'clock in the morning.

But they are a God-send at a wake -- they keep your mind off the corpse.

