



Remarks About The Local Beauty Parlor

"Every now and then," says Phinias Dudd, recalling the infrequent times he enters a local confessional, "I run into a nosey Padre. I think I'm doing pretty well, see. And then this Padre ups and asks: 'How ?' and 'In what way ?' and 'How many times ?' and all that sort of thing. Had a good notion to say: 'Aren't you the nosey one!' but I didn't. Kind of annoys you, answering all his questions."

What Phinias is really admitting is that he himself fell short of the requirements for a complete confession of sins; but didn't know it; and that he then made it necessary for the confessor to elicit the information required. The priest was only trying to help Phinias do the job right -- as the penny catechism tells us -- namely, to confess our sins according to species and number, adding the circumstances, too, that change the species or gravity of particular sins. When Phinias limits his confession to "violating the First, Third, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth" commandments since his last confession, and gives no particulars, the confessor is then bound to question him regarding species and number of sins. No confessor ever asks information that is not required for the valid bestowal, or reception, of absolution.

"Mention A Sin Of Your Past Life"

When the priest says this in confession, neither Phinias, nor you, should argue the point -- just mention the sin as directed.

Why does the priest say that? Because he judges that what you have told him is either not sinful at all - through lack of advertence, or lack of matter, or lack of deliberation - or only doubtfully sinful. In either case, he cannot give absolution unless you tell him something that he judges is really sinful, and sufficient matter for absolution. To get the absolution for which you came to confession - and with it the graces of the Sacrament - you must tell a sin already confessed in your past life.

PRAYERS - Deceased: grandmother of Frank Black of Dillon; Robert Mithen'22; Mrs. Bessie Lewis. Ill: wife of James Leonard (O-C); grandfather of Tony Yuvchak of Sorin