

Blood Donors needed. See
the Prefect of Religion
at 117 Dillon.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
April 16, 1958

Daily evening Mass at 5:10
in Sacred Heart Church,
Monday through Friday.

Questions Of The Season

Query: What attitude should a relative or friend take to a wedding invitation from a Catholic who plans to marry a divorcee before either a minister or a civil authority? How about the reception?

Reply: A Catholic relative or friend, neighbor, or business associate, who receives such a wedding invitation is bound in conscience to refuse to attend the wedding or the reception. The reason: a Catholic can enter into a valid marriage only before a priest. Any attempt at marriage by a Catholic before any authority other than a priest is a serious sin, a scandalous act, and an invalid ceremony which results in concubinage or adultery. If the ceremony is performed by a non-Catholic minister, or if it follows a civil divorce, the penalty of excommunication is incurred with the sin. One doesn't have to be a trained theologian to recognize the evil in such an act. Therefore, since we cannot consent to, encourage, applaud, or congratulate the commission of sin, and the misfortune of excommunication, Catholics are bound to absent themselves from the wedding ceremony and also the reception.

The reception following a wedding ceremony is a gay celebration of a very blessed occasion in which the bride and groom are the guests of honor. They receive the congratulations and approval of their relatives and friends. Your presence at the reception of an invalid marriage (which is no marriage at all) would give tacit approval to your Catholic friend's sinful action -- whether you intend it to do so or not.

This attitude may cause hard feelings and, in the case of relatives, an estrangement from members of the family. Nevertheless, there can be no compromise with the deliberate commission of serious sin.

We'll add one more item: we should not approve of the action with a present, because that is also an action by which we make public approval of sin.

But what will people say? Don't let that bother you too much. You should not be too much surprised if a pagan world taunts you for following the teachings of Our Lord. When the Bishop confirmed you, he gave you a blow on the cheek to remind you to be ready to suffer for the Faith. The martyrs laid down their lives rather than deny the teachings of God by word, or action, or omission.

Remember that the Catholic Church legislates only for Her own members. Hence, two non-Catholics being married before their minister create a different situation entirely. In this case, your presence would provide no scandal, and would not be forbidden, because of your social obligations.

Query: Could permission be granted a Catholic to be godparent for a non-Catholic baby because of relationship or some other good reason?

Reply: Permission is never granted for a Catholic to act as godparent at a non-Catholic Baptism, or for a non-Catholic to act as godparent at a Catholic Baptism. There are no circumstances in which the Church makes exceptions in this regard.

This Sunday Evening: The Chicago Community Theatre will present "The Sign of Jonah" at 8 p.m. in the O'Laughlin Auditorium at St. Mary's College. The production is sponsored by the Lay Family of Holy Cross. Tickets (1.50) are available at the offices of the Deans of Engineering, and Arts and Letters.

PRAYERS REQUESTED - Deceased: father of John Reardon of Sorin; Mr. Joseph Scott (Los Angeles). Ill. uncle of George Rabb of Keenan; Bill Dresson of Walsh; Brother Robert, CSC.