

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 39

Monday, January 12, 1959

Notre Dame, Indiana



NOT TO be out-done by LIFE, we present here a picture of the founder of the R.B. as the Pope placed the red biretta on the head of the new prince of the

Church at ceremonies in Vatican City, December 17, 1958.

● FATHER WILFRED MENARD, who last year was on duty in Howard Hall as Assistant Prefect of Religion, is now an Army chaplain on duty with the U.S.A.T.C., 2nd Training Regiment, Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Fr. Menard will probably be Korea-bound soon.

The last thing you want to think about on this earth is the state of your soul—and it seems to be the last thing you want to think about after vacation.

● YOUR PRAYERS have been requested for the following: Deceased: Father of John M. Thornbury of Stanford; John Murphy, friend of Paul Priebe of Dillon; uncle of Dick Silvestrini of Stanford; friend of John Glockner of Dillon; Sr. Mary Teresa, S.S.J.; Edward J. Peil, ex'04; John F. O'Donnell, '26. Ill: Mother of Tom Elliott of Morrissey; brother of Don Rice of Lyons; niece of Tom Hagan, Off-Campus; Fr. Arthur Hope, C.S.C.; John P. Sweet of Pangborn; Richard Strasser (cook at Corby Hall for the past twenty years). One special intention.

● FATHER LOCHNER, spiritual director of the Third Order of St. Francis, has announced the date for the group's 1959 CLOSED RETREAT. Feb. 15-18. The place, The Fatima Retreat House. Consult your bulletin board for the details.



● WE GET LETTERS...



Dear Father,

You will be interested to know that here at G'town Law we have a little chapel about 15' by 15' with no pews. And of the 10-15 who are there at the noon Mass each day, invariably 4 or 5 or 6 are N.D.'ers. This sounds like something I'd have scoffed at in the "Religious Bulletin" a few years back, but I didn't really come to appreciate the full worth of N.D. until this year.

*John*

Thoughtful of you, John. But your note just increases my concern over the seven lads who left the 8:00 o'clock Mass yesterday morning as soon as the priest closed the tabernacle door. And judging from the empty pews at 8:00 and 9:00, either quite a few took week-ends, or they missed Mass! --Ed.

*(Suggestion: Go to confession tonight.)*

## TWO DECISIVE WEEKS AHEAD...



IS THE SOLE justification for courtship, or "going steady", the prospect of marriage by the two parties within the reasonably foreseeable future? This is the question that Jesuit Father Springer raises in a current periodical. In short, must one be seeking a mate to justify risking the moral danger involved in "steady dating".

FATHER SPRINGER suggests that today the term can mean three different arrangements.

- 1) It can mean the association by two individuals, exclusive of all others, with a frequency of several times a week, and the relationship characterized by affection.
- 2) It can mean that a couple may associate only with each other, and with affection, but they date only a couple of times each month (e.g. when he gets home on a week-end.)
- 3) It can mean that their relationship is one of convenience and companionship rather than of love, even though the couple dates each other frequently and exclusively.

THEN Father Springer adds:

It is submitted that there are other reasons for association between the sexes besides marriage. The first of these could not have been appreciated by the earlier moralists, since it is a finding of adolescent psychology in recent decades. It is the psychological fact that association with the opposite sex is necessary for the normal development of the adolescent personality. As the social consciousness of the adolescent expands, it becomes in time strongly heterosexual and demands the company of the opposite sex as its natural object, required for its proper unfolding. If denied this company, abnormality results:

If the young person is barred from all contact with the opposite sex, the natural desire for such companionship may become very pronounced

and lead to violent and unrestrained behavior as soon as the barriers are lifted. Yet it is just as possible that the correct approach to the opposite sex will not be discovered at all. Then the person through bashfulness, fear and awkwardness is prevented from realizing his life's dream of happiness. (Rudolph Allers, *Sex Psychology in Education* (St. Louis, Herder, 1937), p. 242.)

We can also appreciate better today, thanks to the sociologist and his science, the spiritual benefit of adolescent association to the troubled age of youth. Dr. Urban H. Fleege reports<sup>8</sup> that boys testify they are spiritually helped by their companionship with girls.

Did the earlier moralists also appreciate as fully as we the necessity of heterosexual association as a preparation for future life, which in large measure is spent in social and business contact with the opposite sex?

HIS QUESTIONS and observations lead him to this position: "Steady dating" ought now be regarded as per se licit, and only per accidens illicit. Simply because a couple has no intention of marrying in the foreseeable future, it is not wrong for them to go steady, if "going steady" is not an occasion of sin. Suppose, though, that "steady dating" is with some a proximate occasion of sin?

IN THE LIGHT of the data of modern psychology and sociology, heterosexual adolescent association is necessary. And, concludes Father Springer, the occasion of sin then is also necessary and must be judged according to the moral rules of a necessary occasion.

*John Boorman, c.s.c.*  
Prefect of Religion