

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

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Monday, March 20, 1961

Notre Dame, Ind.

## ST JOSEPH

On this first day of Spring, the Church directs our attention to the silent and strong St Joseph. Patron of the Church, patron of fathers, and patron of workers, his life should help us realize that holiness is found not in the bizarre or the unusual but in our daily relationships and tasks. If you weren't able to honor St Joseph at Mass this morning, attend the 5:10 Mass this evening.

## THIS WEEK

The Masses of this week are intended as aids to help us prepare for celebrating the central events of our Faith.

Tuesday, March 21

Today's lesson foreshadows the Cross and all innocent suffering consecrated by Jesus in His passion and death. Daniel in the Old Testament and the Priest-Messiah in the New. Both are signs of contradiction. Indifference is not a normal human reaction to such a man. Let him appear and immediately there are lines drawn, groups formed and the appearance of both love and hate. His life is a challenge to other men. This is the fearsome thing about holiness. It promises resurrection, but it also involves a cross.

Wednesday, March 22

The Christian religion is a religion of the Word—the Word of God penetrating the greatest sound barrier of all and coming to man in the world and in time. Christians, then, are hearers, listeners. First of all in the liturgy, in that Service of the Word which is the first major part of every Mass. But also in the heart of man, that heart which by the gifts of the Holy Spirit has been endowed with a sensitivity to his guidance. Rest, relaxation, quiet are the conditions of good reception. Lent is just as concerned with this listening, as it is with penance for sin.

Thursday, March 23

Contrition and God's forgiveness are the themes of the Word today. Given the human condition, sin is never surprising. What is surprising is contrition on the human side and forgiveness on the Divine. So Lent assures us that Christ did not come to convict men of sin. The old Law had done that convincingly enough. Jesus' innovation is a promise of forgiveness, a guarantee so manifest as to be a sacrament, a visible sign.

Friday, March 24

Human authority and Divine authority are not necessarily opposed. But the Christian, in the light of today's Epistle and Gospel, must be aware that they can be opposed. And when he is, in conscience, persuaded that this opposition exists, he must be prepared to suffer the consequences of his preference for the Divine. Christian respect for authority, then, is always tempered by this knowledge, so that his witness is not clouded by servility or local prejudice or human respect.

## PENANCE

It's hard to understand what goes on in the mind of a person who attends Mass, Sunday or weekday, without receiving Holy Communion. There may be a few who have legitimate excuses. Our concern, though, is for the fellow who attends Mass often but hasn't received Holy Communion since last Spring! Does confession somehow become easier by its being deferred? Definitely not. So, this week, look around for the fellow who hasn't been to confession for too long a time and get him to accompany you to your regular confessor. Or, send him over to Dillon, or Howard, or Cavanaugh, or Keenan tonight. A couple of pushes on the buzzer there will bring a confessor to the chapel.

## KNIGHTS

The Knights of Columbus will meet tonight at 8:15 for a preliminary report on the success of this year's Bengal Bouts. All members are asked to be present.

## ADORATION

This is the last full week for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Each day during Lent, from Noon until 4:45, the Blessed Sacrament has been exposed in the Lady Chapel of Sacred Heart Church. Have you stopped to make a visit?

## IN YOUR CHARITY

Your prayers are requested for the following: Deceased: Three students from Northwestern killed at the outset of their spring vacation. Ill: Father of Bill Murphy of Alumni; friend of Charles Sacher of Alumni; wife of Prof. Mestrovic of the Art Dept.

"May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul unto life everlasting" and the hand of a priest places the "bread of life" upon the tongue of a creature who knows that Christ has said "Who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting."



EVER STUDY YOUR HANDS? EVER LOOK THEM OVER CAREFULLY? EVER MARVEL AT GOD'S GENIUS IN FASHIONING THEM AS HE HAS? IF NOT, TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO DO JUST THAT. STUDY YOUR HANDS. TO HELP YOU GET STARTED, READ FIRST THESE EXERPTS FROM A RECENT ARTICLE BY FATHER EDMUND MEEHAN. HIS CONCERN IS FOR THE HANDS OF THE PRIEST, IT'S TRUE. BUT IT CAN GET YOU STARTED TO THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU MAY DO WITH YOUR HANDS.

**I**N the rite of priestly ordination when the bishop anoints the candidate's hands, he prays: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this unction, and by this blessing. (Amen.) That whatsoever they shall bless may be blessed, and whatsoever they shall consecrate may be consecrated and sanctified; in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen."

In Holy Orders the anointing is exclusively of the hands. In Baptism, the baby is anointed on the breast, back and head; in Confirmation the child or adult is anointed on the head; in Extreme Unction, the patient is anointed on the sources of the five senses: eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands; a bishop at his Consecration is anointed on the head.

During the Mass God lies in the hands of the priest: those hands so small that, when cupped, they could not hold half a peck of gold dust without spilling some. Yet here at the altar there is room enough between the four tips of his thumbs and forefingers for immensity. So weak are our hands that we cannot lift more than a hundred pounds with them. Yet at the altar His Body rests lightly in the priest's hands. That is because it has no weight. The Body which took several soldiers to place upon the cross, the Body which sagged on the cross, has no weight. How glorious are the mysteries of God!

The hand of the priest distributes Holy Communion. If it were not for that hand, how could the faithful receive their Lord and Master. It is like the contact-shoe gliding along the third rail and enabling the train to run. That shoe

contacting the third rail gives life, current, movement to a 10-car train. That hand conveying the Blessed Sacrament gives spiritual energy, power,—in a word "the more abundant life" to every human wayfarer who receives.

When a priest simply drops in for a visit to the sick and, apart from Extreme Unction, says some prayers, among them is this very effective and impressive one, when, according to the direction of the Ritual he places his hand upon the head of the patient and says:

"They shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover. May Jesus, the Son of Mary, the Lord and Redeemer of the world, through the merits and intercession of His holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and all His saints, show Thee favor and mercy. Amen."

**I**T is to labors of love like these that the hands of the priest are devoted through the greater part of his life: offering sacrifice, pouring the cleansing waters of Baptism over the heads of infants and converts; imparting absolution to those humble enough to say they are sorry for offending God; distributing the Bread of Life to thousands upon thousands; anointing the dying; blessing children, the sick, even the well—in a word, "that whatever they shall bless may be blessed, and whatever they shall consecrate, may be consecrated and sanctified: in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ."