

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

Vol. XLI, No. 62

Wednesday, March 28, 1962

Notre Dame, Indiana

## FALLEN-AWAYS

Every once in a while someone comes along with a new survey dealing with the percentage of Catholics who have lapsed from the Faith during a certain number of years. The same three causes are usually given. One is apathy owing to the adherence to other gods: Sunday morning golf, un-Christian business ethics, etc. Another is ignorance. And the third is the inability to live within the authority of the Church either for a moral reason or an intellectual one. Chances are there are a few who for one or another of these reasons have fallen away around here. This is the time of year to help them resolve their difficulties and be restored to God's grace. Is there someone close to you who has a right to expect help from you?

## Conscience

Conscience is like the most intimate and secret nucleus of man. There he takes refuge with his spiritual faculties in absolute solitude: alone with himself or, better still, alone with God—Whose voice conscience echoes—and with himself. There he decides for good or for evil; there he chooses between the road to victory and the road to defeat. Even if he wanted to, man could never succeed in getting rid of conscience. In the company of his conscience, whether it approves or condemns, he will travel the entire road of life and, again in its company, as with a truthful and incorruptible witness, he will present himself before the judgment-seat of God. Conscience, then, to describe it with an image which is as ancient as it is appropriate, is a sanctuary, on the threshold of which all must halt—even if there be question of a child, father and mother. Only the priest may enter there, as a guardian of souls and minister of the Sacrament of Penance. But even here conscience does not cease to be a jealously guarded sanctuary, of which God wishes the secrecy to be safeguarded with the seal of the most sacred silence.

—Pius XII

## TONIGHT

Dr. Leone speaks this evening at the Marriage Institute. His topic "Plain Talk About Marriage".

## IN YOUR CHARITY

Please pray for the following. Deceased: Friend of Rick Carey of Keenan; Dr. William McGee, '28; Joseph E. Canny, '31; grandfather of Mike Curran, Off-Campus; mother of Philip J. Maloney, '39; father of Edmund Goldsmith, '37; Simon R. Rudolph, '17; John Polodna. Ill: Richard Stevens, Off-Campus; brother of Mr. Warren of the Audio-Visual Dept.

## LENTEN Liturgy

By REV. ROBERT W. HOVDA

Thursday, March 29

Thursday, Third Week in Lent. The exercise of Jesus' healing power is in order that the kingdom of God (Gospel) should be made manifest. And the idea of the kingdom is one profoundly social—social as our public worship is communal and social, social as the moral obligation of social justice in the Reading from Jeremias. A morality which is individualistic and private is inadequate for a disciple of Christ, for one formed by the liturgy of the common sacrifice and the common meal.


Friday, March 30

Friday, Third Week in Lent. It was rarely that Our Lord addressed Himself to one not of the house of Israel. The Gospel of today's Eucharistic celebration gives us a glimpse of the universality of His message and His redeeming power. He calls all men (in the persons of the Samaritans) to the community of new life and new worship ("in spirit and in truth"). And, as the instance of Jewish unfaithfulness in the first Reading did not deprive Israel of its election, neither do our lapses from full fidelity deprive us of ours.

Saturday, March 31

Saturday, Third Week in Lent. There is a community of sin in the human race that places us all in the same fundamental relationship to God. But there is a difference between the woman's quiet admission of her need in the Gospel and the elders' refusal to admit wrongdoing in the Reading. Our public worship counters human pride with its frequent expression of our guilt, a guilt which makes the message of Jesus' saving acts good news indeed.





Every once in a while, we need to be reminded that we are creatures, redeemed and ransomed, adopted sons of God and co-heirs of Christ, the whole thrust of whose being is toward God. Whether we like it or not, we're directed toward Him with every bit of reality within us, that's the way we're made. To the very depths of our being, we yearn for union with God. And prayer is the expression of that yearning; it's our effort to communicate with God. To make this communication possible, we must be "open to God as a field lies open to the life-giving sun and rains of spring"; we must run the risk of God, mindful that prayer is an expression of love and the language of love is sacrifice.

With this in mind, compare your prayers to the "Penitent's Prayer", attributed to a fifth century bishop of Edessa.

"You are rich in grace and mercy, You are willing to cleanse all sinners from their guilt. Cleanse me, have pity on me. In Your mercy spare me, as You spared the publican. You take the sinfulness from sinners, and when we repent You make us welcome beside You. Redeemer of the human race, in Your mercy save me. If salvation is hard for even the just to obtain, what will become of me, sinner that I am? I have not borne the day's burden or the sun's heat; I am one of those who came at the eleventh hour. Save me, have pity on me.

My sins have bowed me to the ground and cast me down from the heights where I sat enthroned. I could not have been more determined on my own ruin if I had rushed over a cliff. Who but You can restore to me the beauty I had at first, O Creator--who but You, Who made me in the first place like Yourself, made me an image of Yourself? It was my own free choice that made me an accomplice of the Devil and a slave of sin. Deliver me, Lord, in Your mercy; have pity on me.

My thoughts confuse me and cloud my mind; my guilt is vaster than the ocean and my sins outnumber the waves in the sea. Yet I have heard Your gracious words: "Call and I shall hear you; knock and I will open the door for you." I call, then, to You like the publican and the prodigal son. I have sinned against heaven and before You. Deliver my soul from its sin, as You delivered theirs, for my misdeeds have kindled Your wrath. In Your mercy have pity on me.

When I remember how I have fallen, I tremble at the thought of Your justice, for You are well aware of my sores and stains. I dare not look upwards, because my sins reach as high as the heavens; the mere sight of the earth is an accusation to me, for my offences exceed the number of its inhabitants. I am determined that the fire shall not consume me, since You have given me Your Body and Blood to feed me. I refuse to be carried off to hell, for You have given me Baptism as a garment to clothe me. Grant me Your grace, and in Your mercy, Lord, forgive me my sins; but above all, may glory be Yours."