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RELIGIOUS



BULLETIN

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Office of University Ministry
University of Notre Dame



Frits Eichenberg

Reconciliation

A Well Kept Secret

One of the best kept secrets at Notre Dame is the fact that there are several Catholics who have had a positive experience of the sacrament of reconciliation. Everyday this sacrament is celebrated in church, in offices, in residence halls or even during a quiet walk around the lakes. I have asked some of our students to write a few words about their experience of reconciliation. I hope that by reading these we can all give some serious thought about receiving the peace of Christ through the sacrament of reconciliation.

- Fr. Andre Leveille, C.S.C.

Reconciliation

Ann Eilers

As a child, I learned that "God is good" and "All-forgiving". Receiving the sacraments for the first time was such a privilege. We prepared for weeks, memorized the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and all the other prayers and 'formula' to make us formed vessels, ready for the initiating rituals. Receiving the Sacrament of Penance for the first time was not any less of a process. The images I have of my early years of experiencing this sacrament are a mixed bag...a bag which I have since tried to sort through and understand in relation to myself as an adult.

Confession used to be an opportunity to air the 'shopping list' of sins which I had accumulated. I remember the anxiety was at its peak as I stood in line waiting to enter the dark, cold confessional. Then the omniscient voice spoke through the black screen. Sometimes I was so relieved that I emerged from the confessional alive that I was unable to feel the grace of the sacrament or to be aware of the soul feeling like a clean slate. I came to know God as a judge. I was quick to say prayers of penance.



Her many sins are forgiven because of her great love

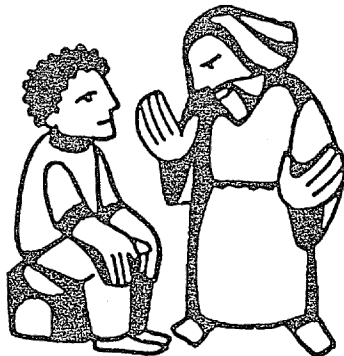
It's taken me a while to sift through these images, to feel comfortable in face-to-face acknowledgement of the times I don't love as well as I could, or am not open to the life-giving strength of God's love and promise of healing. Yet I am increasingly able to experience the sacrament as one of reconciliation rather than of just penance and duty done. In throwing off the fearful residual notions of the Sacrament of Reconciliation I have harbored, I am truly open to the renewal of relationship and the grace God offers as I ask for "a clean heart to be created in me". During Lent especially I can be more aware that "if we've died to ourselves and live through Christ's death then we shall be born again to be blessed in His Love."

Reconciliation

Daniel Groody

A few years ago Father Dan Jenky, C.S.C., gave a sermon on the sacrament of reconciliation which made an impression on me. He said that God's love for us is analogous to our love for someone in marriage. He stressed that a truly loving person in marriage does not define his or her relationship in terms of what is wrong with the other spouse. That idea enabled me to see my relationship with God in a different way in regards to reconciliation.

I now see reconciliation not so much as what I can do with God as much as what God does for me. The sacrament of reconciliation enables Christ to purify my heart, strength my will and clarify my vision of God.



*Go first and be
reconciled
with your brother*

I find it encouraging to realize that God doesn't love me because I am good so much as He makes me good because He loves me.

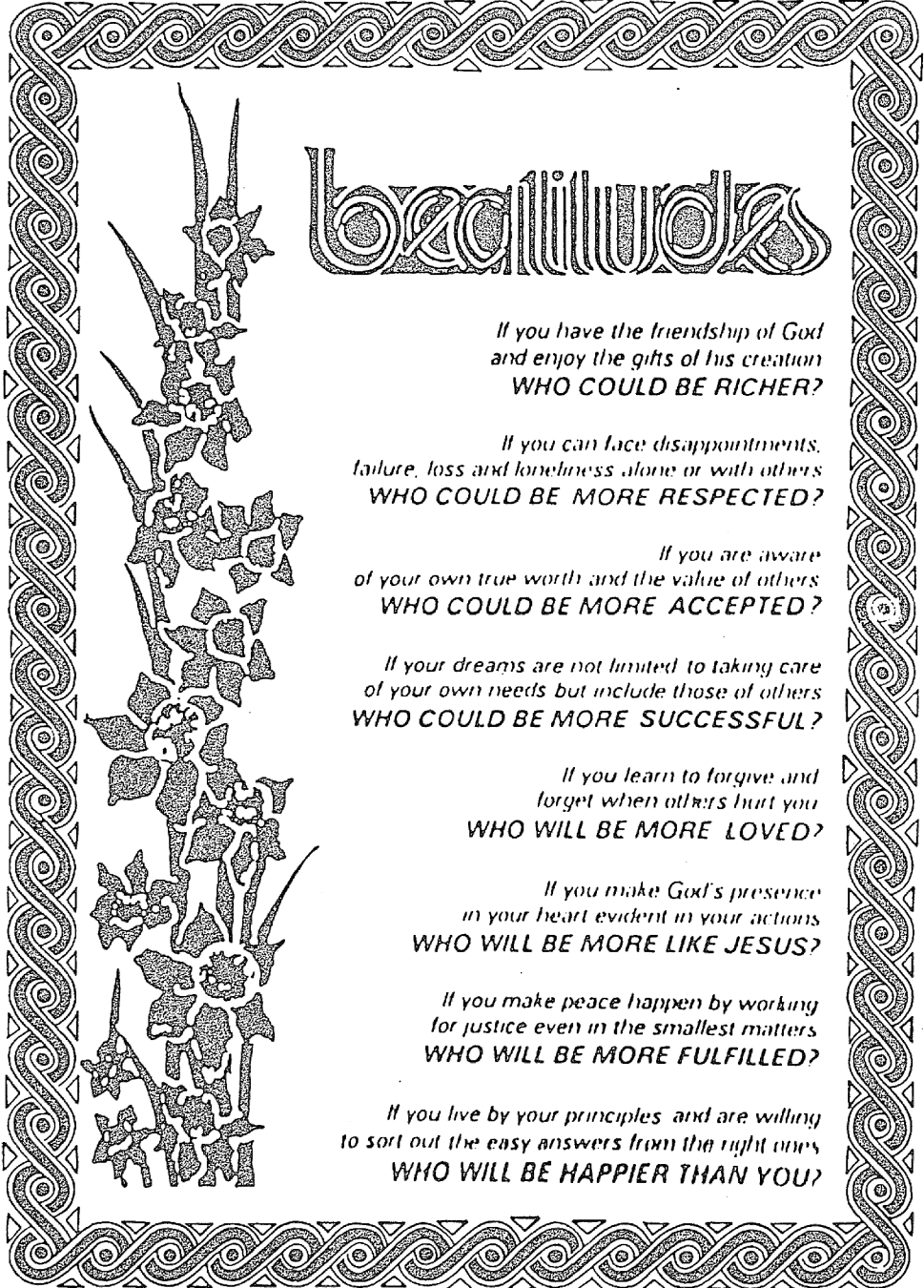
"We are like green houses" says C.S.Lewis "in that we do not attract light because we are bright but we are bright because light shines through us." When sin has darkened my greenhouse, it is a joy to know that I have a loving God who cleans my windows and makes me brighter as a creature. Also, when others are affected by my light they seem to grow too! Reconciliation is a value in my faith as a Catholic.

Lenten
Penance Service

Tuesday
March 18
10 pm

Fr. Andre Leveille

Sacred Heart Church
Notre Dame



beatitudes

*If you have the friendship of God
and enjoy the gifts of his creation*
WHO COULD BE RICHER?

*If you can face disappointments,
failure, loss and loneliness alone or with others*
WHO COULD BE MORE RESPECTED?

*If you are aware
of your own true worth and the value of others*
WHO COULD BE MORE ACCEPTED?

*If your dreams are not limited to taking care
of your own needs but include those of others*
WHO COULD BE MORE SUCCESSFUL?

*If you learn to forgive and
forget when others hurt you*
WHO WILL BE MORE LOVED?

*If you make God's presence
in your heart evident in your actions*
WHO WILL BE MORE LIKE JESUS?

*If you make peace happen by working
for justice even in the smallest matters*
WHO WILL BE MORE FULFILLED?

*If you live by your principles and are willing
to sort out the easy answers from the right ones*
WHO WILL BE HAPPIER THAN YOU?