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A Mother's Prayers

A True Story of a Priest's Railway Journey.

Father Ridsdale, in the gathering darkness, walked up and down the country platform waiting for the arrival of the train which was to take him home to his own parish. He had been away giving a mission in another parish whose pastor was an old school friend of his. The mission had been extraordinary successful, and the meeting of old friends long parted had been an event in the somewhat uneventful life of a country pastor. Pleasant as had been the break in the rather monotonous career, the good priest was nevertheless anxious to get home and be once more among his own parishioners and his books.

"Will the train be punctual to-night?"

"No, Father. She's thirty-five minutes late, owing to the recent heavy rains, the line being here and there submerged." Meanwhile several people had gathered on the platform patiently waiting for the express train, among them a young Irishman, who immediately attracted the priest's attention.

The glow and enthusiasm of the mission he had just finished was still with Father Ridsdale, and he immediately addressed the young man.

"Good evening, Pat."

"Good evening, sir—good evening, Father," said the person addressed.

"Going on?"

"Yes, Father."

"Been to confession lately, Pat?" asked the Father, suddenly. With a priest's instinct he saw at once that his chance of acquaintance was a Catholic.

"No, not lately, Father."

"How long since, Pat?"

"A good long time, Father."

"A bad long time, rather, eh? But how long is it, Pat?"

"Oh, a long time, Father."

"But how long?"

"Bout seven years," came the unwilling acknowledgment.

"Oh, Pat, and your old mother every night, saying her beads for you that you, her boy, may behave'n been to mass or confession to his God and to his church!"

The chance shot had struck home. Father Ridsdale knew he and the evil can all be undone. "If I thought—if I could if I were in church now I'd confess," mumbled poor Pat.

Father Ridsdale saw there was no time to lose. Beckoning the conductor, he slipped a coin into his hand.

"Find us an empty carriage for half an hour, be quick," he said.

"Come on my son," said the priest, and Pat followed him, and they sat down together. The conductor looked surprised that a gentleman in black should prefer a seat in a third-class carriage rather than in a more luxurious compartment, but he said nothing as he took his ticket.

When they were left alone, Father Ridsdale turned again to the question of confession. He saw the young man beside him was of a naturally good disposition, and learned that, as a plateson, he was a layer on the railway he was heard and I will help you to make thrown into rough and frequent your confession."

ly bad company. With an aspir-

tion to the Sacred Heart he de-

termined to make an effort to

bring back this soul to God.

Long and earnestly he talked

to the young man and tried to

arouse him to a sense of the dan-

ger of his state, with apparently

little effect. Souls that have been

dead for a long are not vivified

all at once except in very special

cases. Still the priest did not des-

pair. He knew that there remained

but three-quarters of an hour

before their journey would come

to an end.

"Look here, my son, promise

me this, that for the love you

bear your mother you will turn

over a new leaf and straighten

out matters by a good confes-

sion."

Pat would not give the requir-

ed promise, and Father Ridsdale

the priest as he ran to the door.

then took from his pocket a scap-

ular of the Sacred Heart.

"If you will not promise to do

this, you will at least do one

thing for me, will you not, Pat?"

"What is that, Father?"

"Just to wear this scapular al-

ways in honor of the Sacred

Heart."

Pat Sweeney's faith was not

dead. He nodded assent, took the

scapular and with almost me-

chanical motion put it to his lips

and then put it in his upper vest

pocket. After this the priest re-

mained silent for several minutes

earnestly praying for the young

man's conversion to a better life.

In less than half an hour he

would arrive at his destination,

and Sweeney would get off five

miles further down the line.

And Sweeney Of what was he

thinking? He was unwontedly

silent and now his thoughts flew

back to the feast of the Sacred

Heart years ago when he had

made his First Communion. How

good and pure and earnest he

was then. And now! What a

change! Then he remembered his

going out to work, and his first

glass of whiskey, and the quick-

ly acquired taste for that liquor.

Ah, that was the cause of all un-

faithfulness to his religious du-

ties. That had brought him his

bad name, and lost him first one

good situation and then another,

until at last he was fain to work

as a plate layer on a railway.

Hark work and little pay, and

less respect, and what prospects

he had at one time entertained!

Then his mind reverted to his old

mother. Well, at all events, he

had every month sent her a

part of his wages. That was in

his favor.

"Father," said Pat, timidly,

and with a certain shame-faced-

ness, "do you think likely that

my old mother prays for me

every night?"

The question was a simple one,

but there was a pathetic earnest-

ness in the voice that at once

told Father Ridsdale that there

was a change of disposition.

"Why, Pat, there is a moral

certainty that she does."

"And do you think those pray-

ers do me any good?"

"Do you any good? Of course

they do."

"Well, I've just been thinking

every night, saying her beads for

you that you, her boy, may behave'n

been to mass or confession to his

God and to his church for seven

years, and

"Is not God's mercy infinite?"

One word, one sigh up to heaven

and the evil can all be undone.

"If I thought—if I could if I

were in church now I'd con-

fession," mumbled poor Pat.

Father Ridsdale saw there was

no time to lose. Beckoning the

conductor, he slipped a coin into

his hand.

"Find us an empty carriage

for half an hour, be quick," he

said.

The conductor looked at first

surprised, and then noticing the

Roman collar of the priest, a look

of intelligence stole over his

face.

"That's way, sir," he said.

"Come, Pat," said Father Rids-

dale.

When left to themselves, Fa-

ther Ridsdale said, "Now, my

son, kneel down, and I will sit

by you, and I will help you to

make your confession."

And Pat, with the help of the

zealous priest, made his confes-

sion with tears of compunction

and gratitude.

With a hearty hand-shake and

a blessing the priest stepped off

the train a minute later, leaving

Pat on the steps of the car with

little effect. Souls that have been

dead for a long are not vivified

all at once except in very special

cases. Still the priest did not des-

pair. He knew that there remained

but three-quarters of an hour

before their journey would come

to an end.

Father Ridsdale had scarcely

invested himself of his traveling

clothes, and donned his cassock,

and had sat down to his tea

table with a sigh of comfort at

being home again, when a heavy

and rapid knocking was heard

at the front door.

"Come, Father, come quick."

"What is the matter?" said

the priest as he ran to the door.

"There's an accident on the express, the line has given way, and the messenger started off on a run."

Father Ridsdale was soon on the spot. A hurried glance told the priest that there was nothing of immediate importance to be done there. He ran to the front of the train. Here there were many broken limbs and much moaning and shrieking. The engineer lay dead under his engine. The fireman had escaped with a broken leg. He had jumped in time to save his life. The priest gave general conditional absolution to all, and immediately looked to the more serious cases.

Father Ridsdale looked anxiously among the stricken crowd for his recent companion of the journey. Pat Sweeney could not be seen in the vicinity of the up-turned coach.

"Pat Sweeney is it, Father. The boy ye spoke to? Ye needn't mind about him, Father, for if he's killed he's all right and if not, why it's about the same, for he be all right, for whatever ye did to him he came to his seat, the happiest man in the train. Ah! sure there he is, pinned down by the car roof. Sure he must be past the help ye can now give him."

Taking a light, the priest went to poor Pat. He was seriously injured and held down by the car.

"Leave me, Father, and see to the others first. Thank God I don't need ye as bad as they, thanks be to your reverence."

All saw death was but a matter of minutes, and Father Ridsdale immediately administered Extreme Unction. The sufferer's face was sadly contorted by the agony he was undergoing yet there was on it a look of joy and peace.

"God—sent you, Father to—hear—my confession," said the dying boy.

"I think so, indeed, and don't doubt, my son, that he sent me to this train especially for this purpose in answer of your poor old mother."

"Yes—yes. Thy kingdom come! Into Thy hands—my spirit," were the last words Pat Sweeney uttered. In a minute he was dead.

When the old widow Sweeney arrived soon after at the scene of the accident and saw that her life had been crushed out of her son, she was almost frantic and inconsolable.

"Oh, my boy, my boy! and he away from his duties for seven years. Oh, Pat, were my prayers all in vain for ye?" and she rocked herself on the wet ground by the dead body of her son.

"Are you the mother of Pat Sweeney?" said Father Ridsdale as he came up to the sorrowing woman.

"I am, your reverence, and its sorrowful now with him, I'm afraid."

"In that your mistaken, mother, and in a few words he told her all that had happened on the night down express."

"Oh! glory be to God for his goodness! Sure, it's a happy woman I am now. Patsey's safe, Patsey's safe! He died in grace glory be to God!"

And those who knew not her Irish faith marveled at her fortitude.

She is now Father Ridsdale's housekeeper, and to this day, blesses the day when her Pat traveled by the down express. —Ulster Irish Weekly.

Pope Pius X. has honored David T. Kenny, a prominent citizen of Plainfield, N. J., by appointing him a Private Chamberlain, which is equivalent to a steward in the Papal household, and Knight of the Cape and Sword. The honor is in recognition of Mr. Kenny's work in the interest of the Church in the Trenton Diocese, and was conferred at the solicitation of Bishop McFaul. It was through the efforts of Mr. Kenny that the College of Mount St. Mary, of the Sisters of Mercy, was removed from Bordentown to North Plainfield, he giving the lands upon which the college building stands.

Clubhouse Given to Knights of Columbus

At a special meeting of Rochester Council, Knights of Columbus, Sunday evening announcement was made that the organization had received as a gift from Dr. J. J. A. Burke his residence at No. 65 East Ave., to be used as a clubhouse.

Negotiations were made through James E. Keenan, a real estate agent and a member of the Council.

Upon making a report to the order conveying this information a committee was appointed to assist Mr. Keenan in making the transfer. The members of the committee were M. D. Kavanaugh, M. Mahoney, John R. Keenan and F. J. Hughes.

There is a frontage of 55 feet and a depth of 113 feet to the property and for a few years the house that is on the lot will be large enough to serve as a clubhouse. As the organization is rapidly growing, it is likely that in time a large structure will be built on the plot. For twelve years the Knights of Columbus have had headquarters on the upper floor of the Triangle building.

James M. E. O'Grady, advocate of the Council attended to the transfer of deed last Saturday and as it is expected that the Knights will move into their new quarters May 15th.

K. of C. Convention

The Knights of Columbus will hold their State Convention this year at Niagara Falls on Tuesday May 10th, and Wednesday, May 11th.

The following social functions have been arranged for the entertainment of the delegates and friends, by the members of Niagara Falls Council:

Monday evening, May 9th—Niagara Falls Lodge 346 B. P. O. Elks will entertain visiting delegates with a smoker and vaudeville concert.

Tuesday, 9:30 a. m., May 10th—Carriage ride for women.

Wednesday, 10 a. m., May 11th—Carriage and auto ride overing Abbot Vincent Wehrle, of steel bridge, through Queen Victoria Park, visiting Loretto and Carmelite monasteries.

Wednesday, 2:30 p. m., May 11th—Matinee for women at Arcade Theater.

Other entertainments are being planned and will be announced in the convention hall.

State Deputy Daniel J. Griffin received in private audience Don Jaime de Bourbon, Duke of Madrid, the son of the late Don Carlos, pretender to the Spanish throne. There was no political interest attached to the audience. The father of the present pretender was a very dear friend of the Holy Father when he was Cardinal Sarto, the Patriarch of Venice.

Rev. Father McInnis, whose death occurred recently at Halifax, N. S., was the hero of the cholera epidemic ship England, which reached that point from Europe in 1866. He ministered to the victims of the plague, accepting it himself and living to the age of ninety years. Father McInnis had been in the priesthood sixty-five years, and had been stationed in every diocese of the province.

Sister Mary Hilda Sands, daughter of the late Admiral Sands of Washington, has been re-elected mother superior of Mount de Sales Academy of the Visitation, near Catonsville, Md.

Rev. Vincent Huber, O.S.B., of St. Bede College, Peru, Ill., has been elected the first abbot of the newly founded Benedictine abbey at Peru.



DR. J. J. A. BURKE
Who Gave His Residence to Knights of Columbus

Around the Globe

Rt. Rev. J. A. Glorieux, Bishop of Boise, Idaho, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his consecration April 19.

Denver. It is announced today that the University of Denver, a Methodist institution, will confer the degree of Doctor of Laws on Father William O'Ryan, a Catholic priest of Denver.

Rome, April 11.—The Pope ratified today the nominations of the Consistory as presented to him by Cardinal de Lai, appointing Abbot Vincent Wehrle, of the Monastery of St. Mary's as Bishop of the new diocese of Bismarck, N. D.; Father T. Corbett as Bishop of the new diocese of Duluth, Minn., and the Rev. Joseph F. Busch, of Excelsior, Minn., as Bishop of Lead, S. D.

The Holy Father recently received in private audience Don Jaime de Bourbon, Duke of Madrid, the son of the late Don Carlos, pretender to the Spanish throne. There was no political interest attached to the audience. The father of the present pretender was a very dear friend of the Holy Father when he was Cardinal Sarto, the Patriarch of Venice.

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Residence of Dr. J. J. A. Burke on East Avenue, which has been given to Rochester Council, Knights of Columbus.