

# OLD ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Washington Park

## New Schedule of Sunday Masses

7-9-9:30-10:15-10:30-11:00-11:30  
Noon Day Mass-12:15  
This schedule starts Sunday, Feb. 15

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# Rev. Dr. Owen B. McGuire

## Will It Be Saint Gilbert Keith Chesterton?

Some weeks ago, in speaking of the movement set on foot in the Jesuit weekly *America* to have Cardinal Newman canonized, I referred (only in a "by the way" remark) to a letter that appeared in the same periodical advocating the canonization of Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

That letter came from Kansas—of all places, the home of the most fanatical brand of Prohibition in favor of canonizing the man who sang the praises of wine and its "sacramental" character. And the letter was signed with an Italian name. He described Chesterton as "that tremendous lover of God's Holy Church."

Many a reader of *America* may have been disposed to consider the suggestion as a joke, and indeed, if some one had told Chesterton during life that he was a Saint and would be some day in the near future a candidate for canonization, he would undoubtedly consider it a huge joke.

It is regrettable that some one did not make the suggestion while he lived, for his comment would have been worth recording. But on the other hand, his attitude on the subject would be an argument in his favor in the "Process," if it ever comes. It would show the candidate's humility, and humility, according to all masters of the spiritual life, is the foundation on which the edifice of all the other virtues is raised. Chesterton had that virtue. He was an humble man. He sought truth and prayed for guidance.

He had, namely, that virtue of which I spoke when commenting on Johnson Stephen's remark to Chesterton. "The only difficulty I have about joining the Catholic Church is that I do not think I believe in God. All the rest of the Catholic system is so obviously right and so obviously superior to anything else, that I cannot imagine anyone having any doubt about it." Chesterton himself did not at that time see the full force of the argument.

### FULL BELIEF DELAYED

Years were to pass before he saw its full force. He came by degrees to believe in God, to believe in historical Christianity, to see it was the Christian religion that saved what was worth saving in the civilization of Greece and Rome, that built up on that foundation what we know as Europe and Western Civilization. Proceeding further, he came to see what we owe to the maligned Middle Ages, to write "Heretics," by whom he meant such writers as Wells and Shaw who do not recognize that debt; and then, when he was asked, "Well then, if these are your heretics, what, pray, do you believe yourself?" he wrote, "Orthodoxy." And still, there were years to pass, before he became a Catholic.

In those bygone days, it was said that the three cleverest young men in London were Max Beerbaum, Hilaire Belloc and Gilbert Chesterton. They were friends at that time, though they represented three disparate ideologies. All three were, in a way, artists. They drew caricatures, even at their own expense. But I remember one drawing of Chesterton's position at the time, made by Beerbaum; and it was both apposite and revealing.

It depicted Chesterton sitting on the front steps of Westminster Cathedral (Catholic). He had his back to the door of the edifice, but with his thumb he was pointing across his shoulder to the entrance while telling the passers-by: "It is very beautiful inside." The moral was, of course: "If it is so beautiful inside, why don't you enter yourself?" Yet he did not enter. He was feeling his way, and wanted to be sure of each step as he advanced.

### EVEN GRATEFUL

He had that other virtue which is perhaps as rare as humility—gratitude. It was natural to him, and he had it from childhood. In childhood he enjoyed the little things around him, flowers and even weeds, and his childhood happiness came from the sense of gratitude, "the idea of taking things with gratitude, and not taking things for granted." But as he grew up and began to question, he was appalled by the wickedness, moral wickedness, which he saw in the world whose acquaintance he was making. Hence he refers in "The two problems of my childhood happiness, and my boyish brooding." Although he does not say so himself, I believe that no one can read his autobiography sensitively—I am reading it for the third time—without being convinced that the turning point in

his intellectual, if not religious, development (in his case the two are inseparable) was his meeting with Father John O'Connor, whom he later immortalized as Father Brown in his detective stories. But that is another story.

### Here is the story for today:

I have received from an unknown correspondent, somewhere in Pennsylvania, a letter thanking me for my promise to give my "vote and voice" for the Canonization of Chesterton. I am glad to know that the *COURIER* circulates in Quakerdom, and that it arrives at that particular address by Rural Delivery. The most interesting sentence in the letter is this: "I have long been praying along that path." Interesting, because it shows that the idea is catching on among the common people, independent of my press propaganda. For the correspondent adds: "Your article was the first place I read of the move toward canonizing G. K. C. I hope you will continue to give your voice and also distribute the prayer cards. Also let me know of any other moves towards it."

The card to which he refers is a "memorial card." It consists of two quotations (1) The Introit of the Mass for the Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi, the day on which Chesterton died. It is very opposite (2) And the fol-

## Fourth Degree Sale Of U. S. Bonds Reaches \$63,235

A total sale of \$63,235 in U. S. Defense Savings Bonds and Stamps will be reported to His Excellency, Bishop Kearney state chaplain, and Hugh A. Doyle, state deputy, at the Rochester Fourth Degree Assembly, Knights of Columbus, Lincoln's Birthday banquet, tonight (Thursday) at Powers Hotel.

Since the campaign conducted by the Six Knights a few weeks ago, more than \$7,000 additional in Defense Bonds and Stamps have been sold as the result of the campaign. National recognition has been given the campaign in the *K. of C. News*.

Following tribute from Chesterton's friend, the poet Walter de la Mare:

Knight of the Holy Ghost, he goes his way, Wisdom his melody, Truth his loving jest; The nails of Satan keeps his lance in play, Pity and innocence his heart at rest.

Chesterton's own tribute to Walter de la Mare will be found in the *Autobiography* (first edition) pp. 293-294.

These cards, says my correspondent, "are being reprinted for distribution . . . Copies can be had by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to The Literary Caravan, Room 44, 223 Broadway, New York City. They are worth the stamped envelope, even if you do not pray to G. K. C."

## Catholic Near East Welfare Association

Met. Rev. Francis J. Spellman, D.D., President  
Mt. Rev. Magr. Bryan J. McEntegart, L.L.D., National Secretary  
Rev. John J. Corrigan, Assistant Secretary

### Lenten Devotion

The favorite Lenten devotion of Catholics is the Stations of the Cross. Make them every day during Lent. Give a \$4 of Stations suitable for a mission chapel by an offering of Ten Dollars.

### LOSS OF SOULS DUE TO LACK OF PRIESTS

Archbishop Zaya has to care for seventy-five villages in Iran (formerly Persia), with only five priests to help him. One is sick and four advanced in years. The Church is dying in this territory as a result.

The Archbishop's letter tells the sad situation:

"The lack of priests has caused a great loss of souls to the Church. Indifference, ignorance of faith and practice have become widespread. Worst of all, the Mohammedan element is very active in dechristianizing these areas."

"The only possible remedy is some young priests. I have five studying under the Lazarist Fathers at Rezaiah. This number I could increase, but have no means to clothe, feed and school them. Will you please help me?"

"This serious condition in the Vineyard of the Lord demands aid at once. We beg our readers to help us support, feed and educate young men to become young priests under Archbishop Zaya."

One Hundred Dollars a year for at least five students, we implore. Permit not the faith to die in this sector. Our prayers join the Archbishop that this appeal will be answered.

### MASS OF REPARATION

Lent is a season of prayer and repentance. During this holy season ask the missionaries to offer Holy Mass in reparation for all your sins.

### A HOME FOR CHRIST

You can build a home for Christ by building a mission chapel. Five Hundred Dollars will build a mission chapel in the Near East. What a blessing your gift would be to poor Catholics who have no Church to go to, who hear Holy Mass in a "small shed" or the room of a home.

### WELL SPENT

Five Dollars will enable a poor child to attend a Catholic mission school for one term. The effects of such Catholic training last for life. Take care of one child. Send us Five Dollars for this work.

### CHAPEL 63% DONATED

A month ago we appealed for two hundred people to donate Five Dollars apiece to build a chapel and school in honor of The Holy Family. One hundred and twenty-five have sent us donations. Will you be one of the seventy-five to send Five Dollars that this chapel and school may be built?

### THIRTY MASSES

The Set of Gregorian Masses for a deceased person means Mass every day for thirty consecutive days. Our missionaries will offer these Masses for your deceased parent or friend.

### GIFT FOR ALTAR

A Ten-Dollar offering will enable us to place in a mission chapel a Ciborium. Make this offering.

### DEVOTION INCREASED

When a mission pastor receives enough to build an altar in his chapel, he is relieved. It is very discouraging for a priest to offer Holy Mass on old boards supported at the ends by boxes. Fifty Dollars will pay for the erection of an altar in a mission chapel. Make this gift in thanksgiving for the Blessed Sacrament.

### THE BIBLE AND THE NEAR EAST

Every word of the Bible was written in the Near East. Nearly every event it records took place there. Our Blessed Lord, His Virgin Mother and all His Apostles were natives of this region. Unfortunately nowadays few of the people of the Near East are Catholics. This Association is the Holy Father's work for helping to bring them back. Help us to reunite the people of Bible lands by becoming a member. The dues are only One Dollar a year.

### HAPPINESS RESTORED

The confessional represents God's Mercy Sacrament. In gratitude for this Sacrament give a confessional to a mission chapel. Ten Dollars will enable a missionary to take one in his mission church. It will serve to bring happiness to souls estranged from Christ.

Send all communications to  
Catholic Near East Welfare Association  
480 Lexington Ave. at 46th St. New York, N. Y.



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  - 1 Sugar & Cream
  - 1 Open Vegetable Dish

# Edwards

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