

NEW And NOW

By ROBERT SMETT

Priests are like movie actors. At least there is a certain similarity when it comes to bad publicity.

We have at least a martyr a day among the priesthood dying for the faith in Red China or Yugoslavia. Ten times that are suffering untold hardships in communist prison camps or, at the very least, are subjected to sowing years of labor destroyed by a frenzied enemy.

Thousands of other priests in parishes and monasteries daily re-offer their lives in the service of souls, as imitators of Christ in being all things to all men. And nobody notices!

THEN FATHER FEENEY, a man of former brilliance, whom the press noticed only occasionally as a writer and lecturer, runs an even race with the Korean War and Hollywood beauty queens in nothing less than LIFE magazine.

Why? Because a priest has been caught in error, somebody who shouldn't, has gone off the deep end. Many feel that Father Feeney is mentally ill.

In all charity we might condone such a belief, for it seems impossible that a man of his background could persist in such public obtuseness.

This is the same Father Feeney who once condemned a certain British playwright for evasion and fear of truth, in a poem called "Howard Noel," continues now himself in maniacal pride.

WE CATHOLICS take the situation easier than most for it has happened before—thank God it does not happen often.

It seems to be the dramatic element in the Father Feeney case that draws the reading public, a larger crowd section no doubt than the priest's own books or poetry ever enjoyed.

Movies and literature find little to interest them in the factual life of a priest. This is evidenced by such films as "Going My Way," where Bing Crosby could just as easily have been a Boy Scout leader. A Roman collar was the only clue to priesthood.

"The Keys of the Kingdom" gave the audience nothing more than a "do-gooder" dressed up in a white cassock, while a similar treatment was given to the famous Father Flanagan in "Boytown".

THIS IS CERTAINLY not a true picture of the life of a missionary priest in China, nor of a priestly life devoted to the souls of young boys.

We have nothing against Bing Crosby, Gregory Peck or Pat O'Brien — they are all accomplished entertainers. The mentioned films were no doubt well done, as far as they went. We have nothing against Boy Scout leaders or charitable organizations as such, but they do not constitute priesthood or anything like it.

The life of the priest is something quite different. No dramatic interest says Hollywood. Ask the Maryknollers just returned from Red China about the lack of interest, the lack of drama in his life! Better still, ask Thomas Merton—in a cloistered monastery!

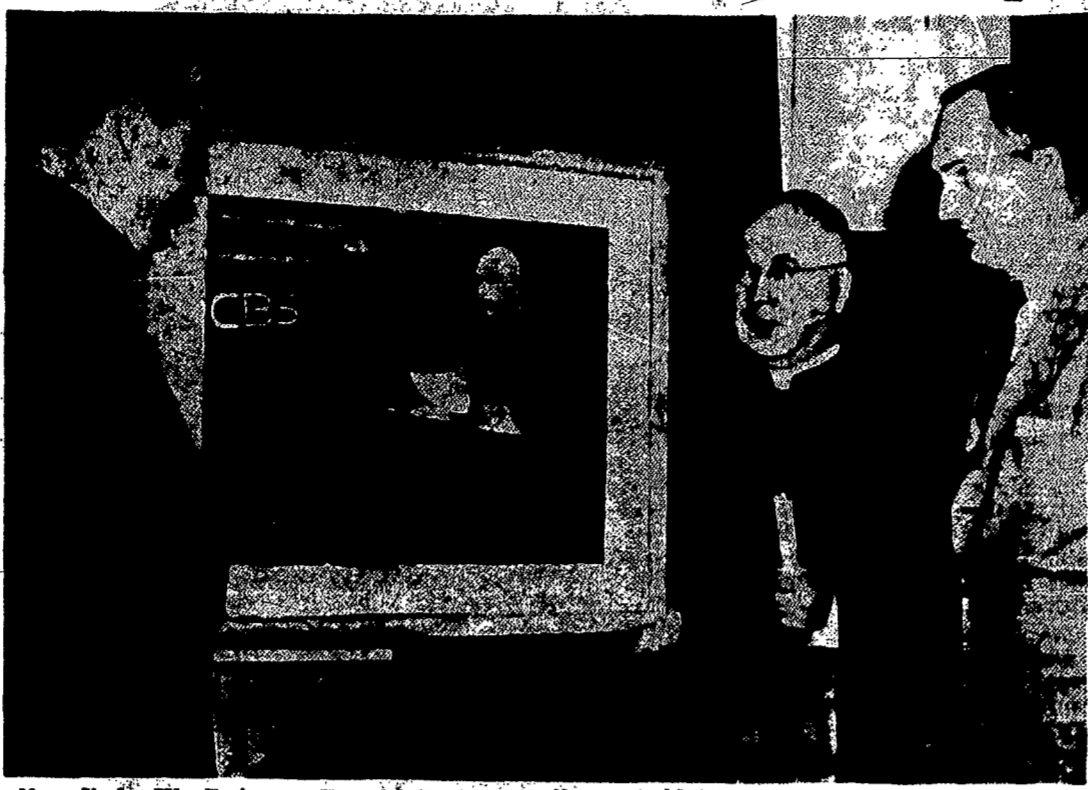
The idea of the priest has been well done a few times by the novelists George Bernard Shaw, "Journal of a Country Curate," Canon Sheehan's "My New Curate," even Robinson's "The Cardinal" is close to it—and none of them lack drama.

WE DON'T NEED to have Father Feeney to prove the priesthood has an element of grandeur—Calvary proved that. We don't need to be told they have human failings—Peter, Augustine and Martin Luther proved that.

Priests are like movie actors or even political candidates. Catch a little pride creeping in, a little too much of the human element, and immediately the forgotten man are "hot copy!"

There is only one way to look at the Father Feeney case, as a caution of weakness, a universal lesson for all—and I think a prayer might be in order for a man who, but for the grace of God, might be you or me!

Cardinal Spellman At TV Workshop



New York—His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, was presented with this large oil painting of himself during a television workshop here attended by some 100 diocesan TV directors, Catholic officials and educators from eight states. The portrait shows Cardinal Spellman as he appeared on the TV religious program "Lamp Unto My Feet" more than a year ago. Shown with the Cardinal are: Father Edwin Broderick, New York archdiocesan director of radio and television (left); and Sig Mickelson, CBS-TV news and public affairs director. The workshop, aimed at teaching the participants how to make the best use of TV facilities in their own communities, was under the joint auspices of the archdiocesan radio and TV department and CBS-TV. (Religious News Service Photo.)

Clergy Attend Workshop On Religious Telecasts

New York—(NC)—A television workshop brought His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman and East Coast diocesan representatives back to school for a one-day study of religious TV programming.

The Cardinal and 80 priests and lay associates from eight states and the District of Columbia attended a Columbia Broadcasting Company clinic designed to show them how to make the most of television facilities in their dioceses.

UNDER THE guidance of CBS technicians the group attended briefings on production supervision, budgeting, make-up, scenery—all the elements of a TV production down to "special effects" of rain and snow.

The clinic was in cooperation with the Department of Radio and Television of the Archdiocese of New York. Cardinal Spellman in a brief address pointed out that the proper use of television contributes to the spread of religious understanding and of tolerance.

The Cardinal was presented with an oil painting depicting an appearance he made last year before the television camera for the "Lamp Unto My Feet" CBS TV program. The painting has been commissioned by Father Edwin Broderick, New York archdiocesan director of television, from a photograph taken at the time of the broadcast. It came to Cardinal Spellman as a complete surprise.

FATHER BRODERICK was co-host to the visiting clergy with Sig Mickelson, CBS-TV director of news and public affairs.

Cardinal Spellman Defends Television

New York—(RNS)—Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York defended television in an address opening a TV workshop here attended by 100 Roman Catholic clergymen and laymen from the Middle Atlantic states.

"It is true that television has been criticized," Cardinal Spellman said, "but everything is criticized. It is my belief that those responsible for TV are doing their utmost to bring into the homes of America programs that are constructive, instructive and stimulating; programs that give recreation and at the same time strive not to offend.

Religious leaders of today can reach infinitely greater numbers of people than their predecessors because of television and radio," the Cardinal said.

"We shall strive particularly to take advantage of these opportunities to teach the truth," he said. "TV and radio give religious and educational leaders advantages that are incalculable."

His Excellency Bishop Kearney will make an appeal for the Bishop's Fund for Victims of War over WHAM, Rochester, on the Catholic Courier-Journal program at 12:10 p.m., Sunday, Mar. 8.



LOOKING over the stage props, authentic reproductions of ancient times, are members of the cast of Holy Family Theatre's "The Robe" (from left) Bernice Miller (Lucia), Clarence Dentinger (Senator Gallio), Mary Reim (Cornelia), Don DeFralne (Demetrius) holding "the robe" and Bernard Sturtevant (Simon Peter).

Germans Plan First TV Mass

Cologne—(NC)—Catholic Television has only recently introduced in this country, first experimental televising of a mass with transmitters in Hamburg and Cologne.

Final Rehearsals Set Lenten Drama

As the final rehearsals bring production dates closer, The Holy Family Theatre prepares for a six performance run of "The Robe," stage adaptation of Lloyd Douglas' best seller.

A special matinee will be given for nuns of the city on Saturday, Mar. 14 at 2:30 p.m. in the school auditorium on Jay St. The five evening performances for the general public will run from Monday to Friday, March 16 to 20, curtain at 8:15 p.m.

For the convenience of those outside Holy Family Parish, admission tickets may be purchased in advance at Tucker's Inc., Catholic Shop located at 300 Main St. E.

Playing leading roles in "The Robe" are Joseph O'Connor, veteran of ten Holy Family productions, as Marcellus; Inez Pascal, in her first starring part, as Diana; and Donald DeFralne, a newcomer to the theatre group, as Demetrius.

CAST IN SUPPORTING roles are: Ella Russell, Dennis Russell, Thomas O'Neil, James Wegman, Patricia Muller, Gerard Schaubert, Jack Lazeroff, Leo Braun, Aloysius Klueber, Bernice Miller, Francine Capone, Mary Reim, Clarence Dentinger, Helen Schramm, Dolores D'Agostino, Lawrence Klueber, Mary Rose Muller, Bernard Sturtevant, William Riedl, George Weber, Winifred McLaughlin, Lee Russell and Dorothy Uhl.

Many members of the company are making their debut in this production.

St. Patrick TV Show Listed By Fr. Peyton

For his ninth Family Theatre offering, Rev. Patrick Peyton has selected the story "Trial at Tara" starring Lelf Erickson, Jeanne Cagney, Richard Hale and Rhys Williams.

"Trial at Tara" has been offered gratis to every television station in the United States, and will be shown between the dates of March 15 and March 17.



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Catholic Hour TV Series Sets 'Living Room Retreat'

Television viewers the country over have the opportunity to make a spiritual retreat in their homes on the five Sundays of March. "A Living Room Retreat" is being conducted on The Catholic Hour.

Produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, The Catholic Hour is carried by 47 NBC-TV stations from coast to coast, (WHAM-TV in Rochester), from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Host for this Lenten series of programs is Father Bertin Roll, O.F.M., Capuchin, who acts as the "living room retreat master".

FATHER ROLL, the director general of the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers in Pittsburgh, is well-known for his work with mothers and children on home life, as well as for the many family retreats he has given.

During each half-hour program Father Roll leads the television viewers in prayer and meditation. He delivers a short sermon, centered about one of the virtues, conducts a problem clinic, and suggests certain family practices which might be adopted in every home.

ASSISTING Father Roll are Catholic radio, stage and television performers who demonstrate the family practices and illustrate various portions of the sermonette.

Among those appearing are Robert Gallagher, who has just completed a successful run with Bert Lahr in "Two On The Aisle"; Pauline Drake, character actress and formerly a cast member of "The Jack Benny Show"; Frances Peters, television and radio actress, and David Anderson, who some years ago was one of the children in "Life With Father".

DURING the problem clinic, Father Roll answers questions which arise out of the practice or lack of it of the particular virtue. Each problem is humorously illustrated, but the solutions are practical and understandable.

Mercy Students Stage Musical, 'Eileen Aroon'

"Eileen Aroon", an Irish Musical Comedy in two-acts with a cast of over 40, will be presented by the students of Our Lady of Mercy High School on Tuesday, Mar. 17 in the school auditorium.

The title role will be played by Helen Flaherty, who will solo in the "Somewhere in Ireland" sequence. Other girl soloists include: Sheila Flynn, Ellen Specht and Marlene Neidinger.

SVL NOVELLI and his orchestra will play for the singing and dancing numbers in both the matinee and evening performances.

A trio of junior starlets—Danny Kennedy, Patrick Allison and Tina Doherty from St. John the Evangelist Grammar School will take the roles of tiny children in the play.

Eileen Casey and Susan Smith, Merlans, will round out the speaking roles played by the students.

MALE PARTS will be taken by students from St. John Fisher College, Aquinas Institute and Edison Technical School. Soloists in this group are: Bob Mason, Tom Russell and Dick Fortner.

Besides the choruses, there will be dances and jigs to familiar Irish airs. Tickets are on sale for \$3.50 and \$7.5. The matinee performance begins at 12 noon and the evening curtain rises at 8:30 p.m.

The Robe + + +

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