

## Toward Better Living First Act Of Careless Nasty On The Table

By MONSIGNOR HART

### A Change For The Better

Emendation of life. Lent is the time in which the Church asks every Christian to reform his way of living, away from sin, away from sinful habits, and into a time of greater devotion. Faith, Hope and Charity are with us always but in Lent we are asked to improve our Faith, increase our Hope and to grow in Charity. The Catholic who follows the recommendation of the Church in these matters is bound to find improvement in the religious practices of his life. The Catholic who neglects this is side-stepping all the advantages that come from a proper observance of the Lenten Season.

Toward better living! This is the general intention of the Lenten Season. We turn away from sin; we do penance for sin. We make a definite effort every day to improve our way of living. Ash Wednesday finds us at the altar railing to receive the blessed ashes upon our forehead as a reminder that death awaits each one of us at the time that God shall assign.

Remember man that thou art dust and into dust thou shalt return. The man who keeps before him the thought of death is the man who will avoid sin. Avoiding sin means to practice virtue, to grow in the love of God and to be prepared always for the day when God shall summon each of us to judgment. This thought is before our minds as we begin Lent with the reception of the blessed ashes on our forehead.

Happiness in life will always be in recognition to the manner in which we fulfill our religious obligations. For those that have been good Christians there is the obligation of seeking a better way of living. For those who have been careless Christians there is the pressing obligation of instituting at once a change for the better.

### Christ Is Calling Us

This call goes out to all. No man is so good that he can put aside the obligation of being better. Too many among us will find in self-examination an indication that we need an immediate change in our way of living. We still find Catholics who feel that once a year is sufficient to receive Holy Communion and we find even in the best parishes numbers of Catholics who make a regular practice of missing Mass on Sunday. This is a most serious condition for any man and it can mean the loss of one's soul. Therefore, the Church would have every Catholic determined to assist at Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. For members of the household and close friends there is an obligation of urging careless Catholics to a more strict performance of their duty in this matter. This should be the first act of a careless Catholic at the beginning of Lent, to make up his mind that he is going to attend Mass regularly on all Sundays and Holy Days.

There are other indications that a man is striving to lead a holy life. Mass on weekdays, weekly or daily Holy Communion, assistance at Lenten devotions. Ash Wednesday comes during this week to remind us that death awaits each one of us. Remember man that thou art dust and into dust thou shalt return. Let us begin Ash Wednesday morning with Holy Mass and with attendance at the evening devotion. Let us be determined that Lent will find us striving to better our lives and to be more pleasing to God in our religious practices.

### Catholic Reading

We have just finished the last week of Catholic Press Month. The earnest Catholic will never be satisfied with the short sermon or instruction in the Sunday Mass. He will feel a hunger for more instruction on the word of God. He will realize that Catholic reading is an important source of continued instruction in Christian Doctrine.

Let us carry over into Lent the resolutions we have made during Catholic Press Month. Let us make the reading of our Catholic newspaper and Catholic magazines and of Catholic books part of our daily program during Lent.

Be sure to have on your table at home your own Catholic Courier-Journal and one or more of the splendid Catholic magazines that await our reading. Remember the presence of a Catholic book or paper on your table is no guarantee that you will read it, but you may be sure that the absence of such a publication will be a sure guarantee that you will not be added to Catholic reading.

At the beginning of Lent see that you have on subscription or through buying individual copies our own Catholic paper and one or more Catholic magazines. Make every day contain some appreciable time for religious reading. Do not be looking for opportunities to avoid the kind of reading that will help you and benefit your soul. Rather have at your elbow at all times one or more Catholic publications and give some time every day to the reading of them.

If your subscription for the Courier-Journal has run out, renew it at once. If you have not been a regular subscriber, enter your name on our rolls at once. The Catholic who is a reader of his weekly newspaper will also be looking for magazines and religious books to complete his program of reading. You need Catholic reading. You will benefit by the regular perusal of your weekly newspaper and of one or more Catholic magazines. Make this part of your Lenten practice.

**Courier Journal**  
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

Vol. 85 - No. 22 February 26, 1954

MOST REVEREND JAMES EDWARD KEARNEY, D.D., President

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service, Religious News Service

Published every Friday by the Rochester Catholic Press Association.  
MAILING OFFICE: 2100 N. Erie St., Rochester 4, N. Y.  
ADVERTISING OFFICE: 2100 N. Erie St., Rochester 4, N. Y.  
TELEPHONE: 411-1111  
CABLE: 411-1111

Returned to second class matter in the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y.  
As provided under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.  
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in U. S. G. O. 41-01  
Postage paid at Rochester, N. Y.

## JOSEPH BREIG

### How To Be Happy

I wonder how many of us realize that the indulgences offered by the Church can avert from us all kinds of troubles and suffering, not only in the next life, but in this life also.

This is a good subject for reflection. I think in this Marian Year, when the Holy Father has opened over wider than usual the inexhaustible treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints, and invites us to enter and help ourselves.

By doing so we can turn away tribulations not only from ourselves, but even from our families, because sometimes we are punished for sin through the anguish we endure when misfortunes strike those we love — our children, for example.

THESE ARE SOME of us who, punished directly, might not be at best gain little spiritual good. There are others whose hearts can be touched most effectively through the anguish of their beloved ones. Such souls often can best be purged through others.

I purposely use the word "purged." We must remember that only the punishments of hell are exclusively the work of God's justice. Other punishments are from His mercy and His love. They are what we might call "purges." Their purpose is to make us fit for the eternal joys He reserves for us.

"WHEN I SAY 'make us fit,'" I mean that God is making us capable of sharing His own infinite happiness. Let me try to make this clear by a parallel or two.

Some of us get joy out of operating an automobile, "rolling along" on a smooth highway, breathing the hills, seeing panoramas open before us, feeling the response of the machinery to our skill. We cannot have this pleasure without first enduring the discipline of learning to drive.

OTHERS SAY, find happiness in playing a musical instrument, or billiards, or golf, or chess, or bridge. But before they are capable of the joy they find in these recreations, they must take the trouble to learn to develop skills, to make themselves, shall we say, "golf-able."

Our chief purpose in existence is to make ourselves with God's help, "heaven-able." Sin makes us less heaven-able. Repentance and atonement make us more heaven-able.

GOD IS LIKE a father or mother picking up a little child each time it tumbles, and encouraging it to try again until it learns to walk. Until it has achieved the joy of walking, his love is not complete. God's punishments for sin, then (save only the punishment of hell) are for the purpose of making us heaven-able. We cannot have the happiness of heaven if our affections are turned toward sin, because the happiness of heaven is a sinless happiness. It cannot be experienced by the sinful for the same reason that the blind cannot enjoy sunlight because the blind are not capable of experiencing it.

GOD'S PUNISHMENTS, therefore, are for the purpose of perfecting us for perfect joy. They are not vengeful; they come from His love. God is like a lover who leads his beloved on a long and tiring climb up a steep hill in order that he might share with her the breathtaking beauty of the scene below.

But God is so good that He sent His only-begotten Son not only to open heaven to us, but to smooth the way for us. The Church is Christ still with us, and Christ in His Church says to us, in effect, "Here is my infinite spiritual strength, and here is the superabundant strength of Our Lady and of the saints. You can draw upon all this to perfect yourself, to atone for your sins, to redress the balance which you have disturbed."

AND SO WE are offered indulgences which will wipe out, in whole or in part, the debt of atonement we owe for sins which have been forgiven. We are offered a way of sparing ourselves and our families much unhappiness which otherwise will come upon us. It is a way to ease that it can be explained only in the light of God's boundless goodness.

Then if you want tranquility and serenity not only hereafter, but here—if you would like your home to be the joyous anteroom to heaven that it ought to be—you will be wise to accept the generosity of Christ in His Church. You will be wise not to neglect your many opportunities for gaining indulgences.



## Bishop Kearney's Appointments

### MARCH

- 3 Ash Wednesday—Columbia Civic Center Chapel, Lenten Mass—7:45 a.m.
- (During Lent this Mass will be celebrated every weekday.)
- 4 Thursday—St. Francis Xavier, Novena of Grace—7:45 p.m.
- 5 Friday—St. Joseph's St. Monica Sodality Mass—8:00 a.m.
- 6 St. Bernard's Seminary, Conference for Students—5:30 p.m.
- 7 St. Francis Xavier, Novena of Grace—7:45 p.m.
- 7 Sunday—Our Lady of Good Counsel Convent, White Plains—Religious Professions
- 8 Monday—Mary High School Sodality Reception—8:30 p.m.
- 9 St. Francis Xavier, Novena of Grace—7:45 p.m.
- 10 Tuesday—Nazareth College, St. Thomas Symposium—1:00 p.m.
- 11 St. Francis Xavier, Novena of Grace—7:45 p.m.
- 12 Wednesday—St. Francis Xavier, Novena of Grace—7:45 p.m.
- 13 Friday—St. Francis Xavier, Chelms Mass of Novena of Grace—1:30 a.m.
- 14 Saturday—Our Lady of the Genesee Trappist Monastery, Fifteenth Ordinations of Deacons—9:30 a.m.
- 15 Sunday—St. Joseph's Annual Communion Mass of the Knights of Columbus—7:30 a.m.
- 16 St. John the Evangelist, Confirmation—5:30 p.m.
- 17 St. Mary's Hospital, Annual Dinner of the Medical and Advisory Boards—6:00 p.m.
- 18 Monday—Our Lady of Lourdes, Brighton—Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 19 Tuesday—Blessed Sacrament, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 20 Wednesday—St. Patrick's, Solemn Pontifical Mass—10:30 a.m.
- 21 Kesteven Kodak Office Building, Dedication of Plaque commemorating original site of first Catholic Church in Rochester and St. Patrick's Cathedral—12 Noon.
- 22 Nazareth College, French Mission Unit Meeting—2:00 p.m.
- 23 Western Hotel, Annual Knights of Equity St. Patrick's Day Banquet—7:00 p.m.
- 24 Thursday—St. Mary's Hospital, Capping of Nurses—4:00 p.m.
- 25 Holy Apostles, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 26 Friday—Nazareth Motherhouse, Solemn Pontifical Mass, Feast of St. Joseph—11:00 a.m.
- 27 Our Lady of Good Counsel, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 28 Sunday—St. Joseph's, Annual Communion Mass of the Holy Name Society of Food Employees—8:00 a.m.
- 29 Corpus Christi, Confirmation—8:00 p.m.
- 30 Columbia Civic Center, Diocesan Sports Banquet—5:00 p.m.
- 31 Monday—Holy Redeemer, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 32 Tuesday—St. Bridget's, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 33 Wednesday—St. John Fisher College, Retreat Mass—9:00 a.m.
- 34 Thursday—St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg—Installation of the Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg, D.D., Sixth Bishop of Ogdensburg—11:00 a.m.
- 35 Mercy Motherhouse Chapel—Marion Year Service for the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae—7:30 p.m.
- 36 Friday—St. Cecilia's, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 37 Sunday—Nazareth College, Glee Club Concert—8:00 p.m.
- 38 Holy Family, Confirmation—7:45 p.m.



## Bishop Casey's Appointments

### MARCH

- 3 Wednesday—Sacred Heart Cathedral—Ash Wednesday Service—7:45 p.m.
- 15 Monday—St. Basil's, Sermon—7:15 p.m.
- 16 Tuesday—St. Thomas, Summerville—Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 18 Thursday—St. James—Confirmation—7:45 p.m.
- 23 Thursday—St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg—Installation of Bishop Kellenberg—11:00 a.m.

## Woman Reads, Writes Self, Husband Into Faith

Washington — (NC) — A woman free-lance writer has disclosed that through the Catholic Press she read and wrote herself into the Catholic Faith.

Not only that, but Billie Eckert, Martin of St. Louis, in a story of her conversion, related "my good husband of 27 years joined me of his own volition. They were instructed and baptized by an old friend, Msgr. Harry Stiles, editor of the St. Louis Register, in the Church of St. Michael the Archangel, St. Louis, several weeks ago.

MRS. MARTIN wrote the news of her conversion in a letter to Katherine McKiever, N.C.W.C. Feature Service editor, along with a copy of the February (Catholic Press Month) issue of The Sentinel magazine, published in New York by the Blessed Sacrament Fathers. The article contained an article, "No More Wasting In The Dark." Mrs. Martin's story on her conversion.

For several years, Mrs. Martin has been a contributor of fiction and verse to the Christmas and Easter supplements of the N.C.W.C. Feature Service. She also has contributed to Catholic magazines and periodicals. A thumbnail sketch of her in The Sentinel says that besides her husband, she has "another love in her life. . . Editors, Catholic editors."

"As first the idea of doing a conversion piece went into my head behind the door, literally. But that was at the first," Mrs. Martin wrote to Miss McKiever.

In the magazine story of her conversion, Mrs. Martin said that in the late 1940's after she began free-lance writing, she found the Catholic Press "a fairly lucrative and always kindly and courteous market."

"SEEKING TO better acquaint myself with the style, and general requirements

## You Can Win Converts

Winning an Opera Star  
By

Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

Did you ever hear of a sore throat leading to a new way of life? Probably not. Yet that is what happened

when Joan Hammond, the noted Australian operatic soprano and recitalist, developed a sore throat in Dublin in 1940. In answer to her inquiry for a good doctor, a friend suggested that she see Dr. Colm A. McDonnell.

After treating her throat Dr. McDonnell, with typical Irish hospitality, invited the singer to his home for dinner. Besides his wife and children, Miss Hammond there met Father Senan, O.F.M. Cap., editor of the Capuchin Annual, a splendid volume of Irish prose and poetry with numerous pictures of Ireland and her people.

With thoughtfulness and tact the doctor seated the Capuchin priest next to the opera star. Inevitably the conversation turned to religion and Miss Hammond had a number of questions about the Catholic Faith.

"Father Senan," she asked, "why do Catholics go to confession to a priest? Doesn't the forgiveness of sins imply divine power and aren't priests simply human beings like the rest of us?"

"YES," REPLIED the Capuchin, "priests are only human beings but they are the duly accredited ambassadors of God and they act in His name and with His authority. Christ conferred this power upon His first bishops and priests when He said: 'Whomever you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whomever you shall retain, they are retained.' Hence, God's power of pardoning is channeled through His priests to His people."

"Did the Apostles actually forgive sins?" asked Miss Hammond.

"Yes," replied Father Senan. "Saint Paul says, 'God hath reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.' The practice of confession has continued in the Church from the days of the Apostles and it will continue to the end of time. These channels of God's pardon through His divinely appointed ambassadors is one of the greatest gifts of God to man. Indeed, it is one of the sources of our greatest happiness."

"BUT," persisted Miss Hammond, "does the mere telling of sins to a priest help one to be a better person? How can a mere mechanical act like telling one's sins to a priest effect an interior reformation and an amendment of life?"

"It can't," acknowledged the Capuchin, "and there is no forgiveness unless the penitent has genuine sorrow for sin and firm purpose of amendment. That is why the Church places such tremendous emphasis upon the avoidance of the occasions of sin and demands genuine improvement in conduct. Otherwise confession would be a mere soporific or, worse still, a mockery and a farce."

"Well," observed the opera singer, "that's news to me. But it certainly makes sense. I have more questions to ask but as I'll be traveling a good portion of the year, I guess I'll have to ask them by mail."

"That will be all right," broke in Father Senan. "Wherever you are you can reach me by mail and whatever your questions are I'll endeavor to answer them."

FATHER SENAN was true to his promise. Over the next 13 years he wrote the answers to Miss Hammond's questions as she toured the various countries of the world. In addition, he explained step by step the great teachings of our holy Faith.

In May 1953 Miss Hammond returned to Dublin—all her questions answered. She looked up Father Senan and with Dr. McDonnell and Lolita Marriott of Melbourne acting as sponsors, she received into the fold of Christ in St. Mary of the Angels Church.

"This is the happiest day of my life," said Joan. "My one regret is that I have wasted so many years outside the Catholic Church. I'll try to make up for those lost years by practicing my new-found Faith with double earnestness and devotion. When all my difficulties were solved I wanted to come back for my re-education to the warmhearted Irish people who welcomed me to their home, and to the big-hearted priest whose answers followed me over the seven seas."

A touching tribute and a deserving one. A sore throat, a kind and thoughtful doctor and a zealous priest. These were the stepping stones which led a gifted soul across the threshold of Christ's Church.

## CHURCH MUSIC

## 16. Rochester Annals (4) The Sisters Of Mercy

By REV. BENEDICT EHLMANN

The Sisters of Mercy in the Rochester diocese, next in number to the Sisters of St. Joseph, have exerted an influence on the affairs of church music second to none. In their eighteen grade schools around the diocese, in Mercy High School in Rochester and St. Mary's High School in Auburn, and in the Nursing School of St. James Hospital in Hornell, these zealous and genial Sisters have taken an active and effective leadership in promoting the best ideals of church music.

Actively associated with them as I have been over many years, I know whereof I speak; and I can bear first-hand witness to their ardent and sincere zeal for the holy Liturgy of the Church. In their "Book of Customs" it is written: "Papal pronouncements should always receive the heartiest endorsement from religious." The Church recommends Gregorian Chant as the best music for congregational singing. "Church music must not only be good in itself but well executed for nothing less than the best is worthy to offer to God." "It is out custom at all religious functions . . . to use Gregorian and other approved music."

To put these standards into effect, Father John Petter, of whom we wrote earlier in his series (cf. article 13), was engaged to teach liturgical music, and more especially the Chant, to the Novices in October 1918. He continued this assignment; zealous and indefatigable as he was, for twenty-two years until his death.

IN PRESENT retrospect, how extensive and how fruitful his teaching appears, covering as it does for over two decades the three major institutions of the diocese—St. Bernard's Seminary and the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph and of the Sisters of Mercy—besides his long-term presidency of the National Society of St. Gregory.

It was during a National Convention of the St. Gregory Society held in Pittsburgh in the mid '20's that Father Petter employed for his choir a scholar, consisting of Rochester nuns. It was at a Requiem Mass for the deceased members of the Society, and the measure of Father Petter's training can be gauged by the fact that the nuns were able to sing the entire Mass in the original Gregorian, note for note, including the very difficult Gradual and Tract.

IN THE SUMMER of 1917, Mother Stevens, co-directress of the Plus X School of Liturgical Music in New York City, came to Rochester to help train the future teachers in the classroom procedures teaching church music.

This was the beginning of a long association of the Plus X School with Rochester's religious teachers, and one of Mother Stevens' greatest consolations in her last years was the memory of Rochester, so cordial to her, so eager for the great and noble things of God which inflamed her own dedicated soul.

The Sisters of Mercy take three years of Gregorian Music during their Novitiate, including theory and choir work. All the Masses of the Kyrie are learned in their entirety, eighteen of them! Every day the regular Community Mass at the Motherhouse is either a Sung Mass or a dialog Mass, in which the entire congregation of the Sisters participates.

In Sung Mass, not only the Ordinary but also the Proper is sung in its entirety by the Sisters. In the mission houses of the Order there are often Sung Masses, in which all sing their parts.

Without them Mercy's story of musical achievement would be considerably lessened. We can but regret that a wise administration has placed them all at the Motherhouse which, through them, can be a powerhouse for the future progress of eucharistic renewal in the Rochester diocese.

SISTERS ARE not anxious to get their names in print, but occasionally at least, for the sake of the record and the good of souls, they must submit to the necessity of a public appearance, especially those in the choir. Sister M. de Pazzi, Sister M. Margaret, and Sister M. Helena. These were among the original trainees under the teaching of Father Petter and Mother Stevens, and they have given well through the years.

They will put HIM TO DEATH. Our appreciation of the courage of Christ is increased by our realization that He foresaw clearly all the sufferings that would lead up to His death; He also saw clearly that He would rise from the dead on the third day.

But when He spoke to His disciples of these things they did not understand. They did not get to know the things that were being said. They found with them the Master who had called them to be His followers. They found him bestowing blessings upon all, curing the sick and even raising the dead to life.

They could see no reason why any man would want to bring harm to their Master or to bring death upon Him, one whose presence brought such peace and happiness to all with whom He dealt. Yet they heard Jesus telling them of the persecutions that awaited Him on his impending visit to Jerusalem.

Even the greatest criminal could face no such serious program of suffering, persecutions and finally death. Little wonder that His Apostles understood none of these things; little wonder that this thing was hidden from them and they did not get to know the meaning of what Christ had said to them. We cannot get the full meaning of the program of suffering and death that awaited Christ unless we let His words sink into our hearts. Let us prepare then to have in mind the same things that were in the mind of the Saviour as he prepared with the twelve to go up to Jerusalem. His was a program of suffering, of persecution, of death. He was gladly undertaking it because He had come to redeem mankind and had chosen to suffer and die for man's salvation. It was no triumphant journey; it was no overcoming of the powers of evil, but it was definitely a proximate preparation of the Lamb of God to suffer and die for our sins.

## Sunday Sermon

By Monsignor Hart

### THEY WILL PUT HIM TO DEATH

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