

Nuns Give Views On Juvenile Delinquency

Are Today's Catholic School Children Better Or Worse Than Their Parents?

By BOB CREAM
(Staff Writer, N.C.W.C. News Service)

"Sister . . . You're teaching children today and you taught their parents 25 years ago . . . Are today's Catholic school kids worse?"

Sister Mary Peter, school principal from Detroit, frowned at the question, raised a finger to her cheek. Then she leaned forward and talked earnestly.

"We have the most marvelous young people the world has ever seen."

That same question was put to dozens of veteran, teaching nuns who taught two generations. Their reactions and answers were startlingly the same.

Brushing aside juvenile delinquency headlines, the Sisters testified enthusiastically to a "responsible," "serious," "confident" generation of young people—so alert, so eager to learn that they are often misunderstood.

THE SISTERS were questioned at the National Catholic Educational Association convention in hotel lobbies, meeting halls and dining rooms. Almost 50 nuns were questioned a random out of thousands of teaching Sisters. They were asked just one question: "Are children in Catholic schools today worse than their parents?" But on that one question they had plenty to say.

The answer came like this: "Kids today are no worse," said a Wisconsin grade school Sister who has coached two generations of softball teams. "With all they have to put up with, the kids are mighty, mighty good."

"There's too much about lack of responsibility," said a California college registrar. "But give them a job to do and they're marvelous."

"I think they're fine," said an East Coast private school dean. "If they have something to say they come right out with it. That's why people are critical of them."

"Our children are far more spirited," said a high school principal. "That's our biggest help today."

OTHER SISTERS said their pupils now are easier to handle—interested and earnest—serious about religion.

None pretended to know about all the kids in all the schools of America. But each nun beamed with excitement and faith in the pupils filling Catholic classrooms today.

How did the children get that way? For one thing, the Sisters suggested, they get better schooling. Catholic school systems have

nuns as proof of the strength of today's young people.

"THE WHOLE world is different," the president of a Massachusetts girls' college explained. "The young people face problems that many parents just don't understand."

Juvenile delinquency? None of the Sisters underestimated the problem. But, judging from the Catholic school children they know, most thought the sensational aspects of juvenile delinquency are overestimated. "A minority get their pictures splashed all over the papers," one parochial school teacher said. "The majority who are living good lives never get noticed."

"I'm close to my children—I was close to their parents," a wrinkled Sister commented. "When today's children kick up their heels, they're delinquents. Critical parents forget that when they were in school the country was just coming out of the Twenties. But I haven't forgotten—they were pretty wild!"

Then the Sister grinned and looked up over her glasses. Human nature doesn't change, you know. But maybe our understanding can.

Intoxication Tops In-Laws As Marriage Wrecker

Indianapolis, Ind.—(NC)—Excessive drinking is a far more dangerous threat to a happy marriage than is an interfering mother-in-law, Father John A. O'Brien of the University of Notre Dame declared here.

"Drinking is the predominant factor in 30 per cent of marriage failures," Father O'Brien said, "while in-law trouble can be blamed for only 7 per cent of the marriages which go on the rocks."

The author and marriage counselor addressed the Indianapolis Council of Catholic Women.

A recent study of 5,000 marriage failures revealed that infidelity ranks second to excessive drinking as a disrupting factor, Father O'Brien said.

He listed other factors, in order of their importance, as irresponsibility, radical uncongeniality, in-law trouble, sex maladjustments, mental illness, religious differences, and financial difficulties.

Lack of a deep religious faith contributes to marital misunderstanding, Father O'Brien said.

Film Censor Fight Enters Ohio Court

Columbus, O.—(NC)—Ohio has become the site of a major movie censorship battle in the wake of the U. S. Supreme Court film decisions. The high court overrode the State's censorship board ruling against the movie, "M," and film producers have now challenged the right of the board to operate.

A suit filed in Franklin County Court of Common Pleas by RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., and the Independent Owners of Ohio, now holds that the Ohio board is without authority to censor because of the Supreme Court rulings.

CHIEF FILM censor Dr. Clyde Hisson has predicted that Ohio courts will take action to remodel the State's film censorship laws—as New York State has recently done—during coming sessions of the legislature.

At the same time, the Catholic Parent-Teacher League of the Diocese of Cleveland has expressed alarm over "efforts to sway public opinion against legal censorship of films" on the part of motion picture business organizations in Ohio.

The League said it is considering development of special recreation programs which will substitute for movies for children, especially over the weekend if movie theaters in Ohio get "uncontrolled freedom."

Mrs. Stephen Kakubowski, League president, pointed to stepped-up campaigns on the part of the Motion Picture Association of America through formation of a federation of Motion Picture Councils, including Ohio moviemakers, as "an important move on the industry's part in its efforts to sway public opinion against the legal censorship of films."

Fiji Nuns Get Own Superiors

Re, Fiji—(NC)—A notable step forward was taken by the Church in Fiji when 110 Fijian and Rotuman Sisters were formed into communities under their own superiors.

Until recently, the Sisters were attached to, and worked with, three pontifical congregations whose motherhouses were abroad—the Marist Sisters, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, and the Sisters of the Compassion.

GOLD MEDAL FOR BABY



Philadelphia—Archbishop John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., of Philadelphia has authorized the gift of a gold medal to every Catholic baby born in the archdiocese on the feast days of Our Lady. One of the babies, Mary Katherine, is shown receiving her medal from Sister Regina Mercedes of the Sisters of Mercy at the Misericordia Hospital here. Looking on are: Mrs. Leonard Eckrodt, the infant's mother; and Nurse Kathleen Dillensnyder, the baby's aunt. The medals are given through the Archbishop's Committee for Christian Home and Family. (RNS Photo.)

Convert Mother Of 10 Chosen Mother Of Year

Steubenville—(NC)—Mrs. Virginia Keck, 34, a convert when she was 18, wife of a dairy farmer and mother of 10, has been chosen as the Steubenville Diocesan Mother of 1954.

Her husband, Karl, runs the family farm near Albany and acts as part-time school bus driver. The Kecks were married in 1940 and their 10 children, ranging in age from 12 years to 16 months, include a set of triplets.

MRS. KECK said she looks upon each of her children as "one more blessing" and feels sorry for married couples who "are missing the happiness and peace of marriage" found in large families.

The Kecks live 12 miles from St. Aloysius Church, their parish, but their four eldest children never fail to attend religious instruction classes. Their pastor, Father Jan B. Kish, said the Kecks are among "the most faithful contributors to the parish school building fund" but the family as yet has been unable to use the facilities of the new

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Cardinal Mooney Lists Tests For Practical Catholics

Greensboro, N. C.—(NC)—Three tests of practical Catholicity were spelled out here by His Eminence Edward Cardinal Mooney at the annual North Carolina Catholic Laymen's Association convention and pilgrimage, characterized as the greatest manifestation of Catholicity in the history of North Carolina.

"Frankly, the man whose knowledge of things Catholic is not proportionate to his general education, his professional standing and his position in business or society, does not meet" the first test of practical Catholicity, which is knowledge of the Church's teachings, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Detroit said.

In his sermon at the Mass which highlighted the closing day of the convention, Cardinal Mooney said there are three essential tests of practical Catholicity.

"A keen observer remarked to me a few days ago that God is getting to be a person whose acquaintance even some Catholics seemed reluctant to admit, except for a short time on Sunday morning," the Cardinal said. "Happily, however, failure to meet this informational test of practical Catholicity is not irreparable. The Catholic who is educated can, at not great effort, become an educated Catholic."

The Cardinal added that "group action is more effective than individual action" as he recommended learning the teachings of the Church in study clubs and similar gatherings.

2 "Another test of practical Catholicity is the sustaining and strengthening of our spiritual life through frequent use of the Sacraments which the Church, in the Name of Christ, administers," Cardinal Mooney said. He added it is small wonder "that in the popular mind the answer to the question: 'Is so-and-so a practical Catholic?' depends upon the frequency and regularity of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist."

3 Cardinal Mooney said the third test of practical Catholicity is confidence in the Church and this "is easier to recognize in the concrete than to define in the abstract." The Detroit prelate described this confidence as "almost a sixth sense which makes the individual feel a particularly responsive instrument in the hand of God, working through His Church."

He said this confidence is the "first objective in outside attacks on the Church," and the first Catholic quality of soul to suffer when men of dark hour threaten in the pursuit of particular aims or the satisfaction of personal feelings.

"We have all known people who have lost this confidence in the Church," he said, "and we have all known brilliant souls whose this same confidence has made humble to the point of greatness." Cardinal Mooney said.

CARDINAL MOONEY

world is right when it holds that the Catholic standard of moral conduct is humanly impossible. Cardinal Mooney said, "God never meant it to be humanly possible, and He provided abundance for the Divine help which alone helps us to live a Christian life."

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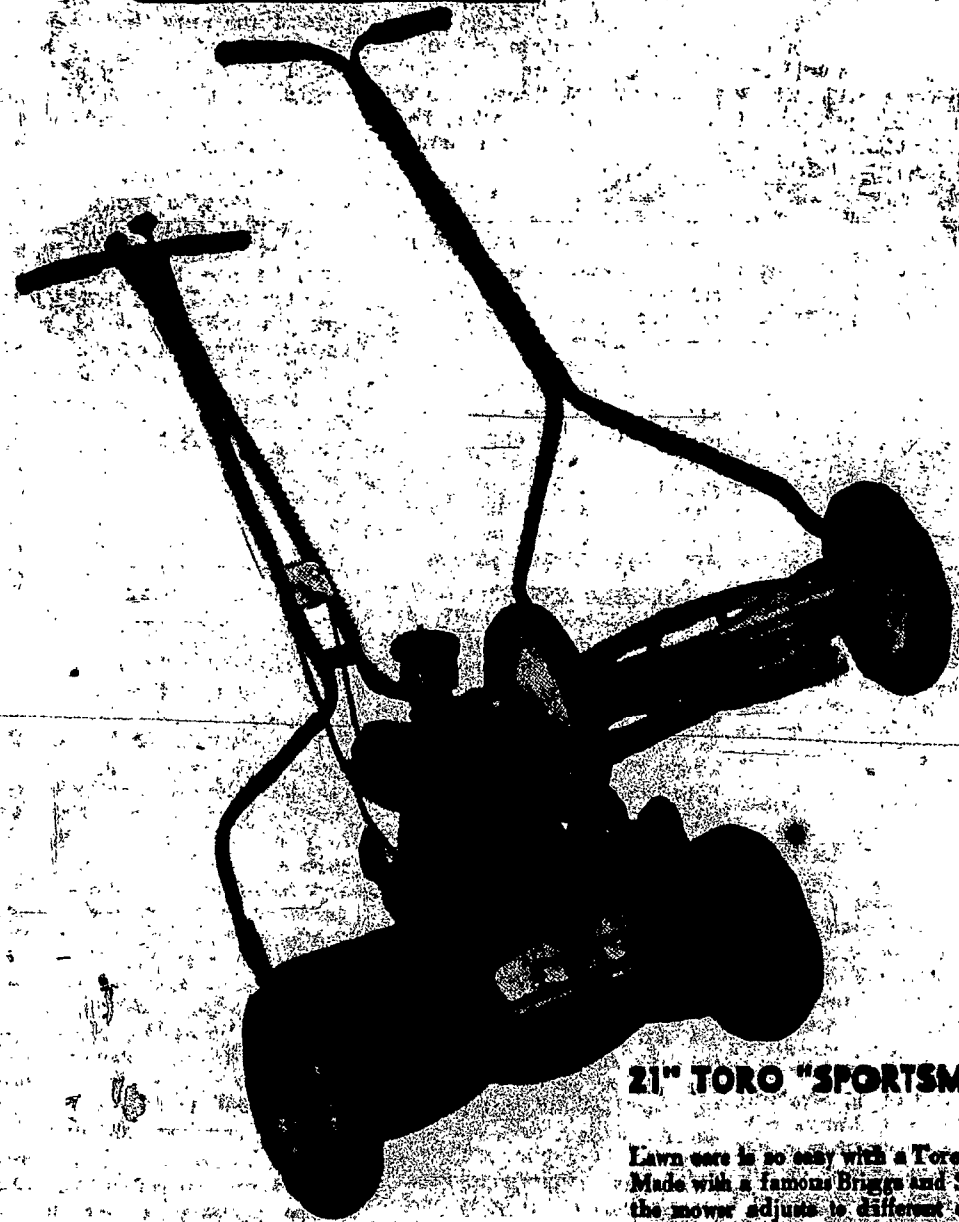
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