

How Are Childless Couples To Answer Taunts Of Others?

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S.J.
Assistant Professor of Sociology at St. Louis University

We have been married for almost nine years and the doctor feels certain that we will never have any children. We have accepted this as God's will, but apparently others don't see it that way. Time and again, my husband and I have been subjected to cruelly insinuating remarks, as if we were guilty of some crime. Why should good Catholics take this frightfully unchristian approach? Aren't there many other couples in our situation?

Yes, there are and perhaps always have been childless couples in every society.

Sometimes, God has worked a miracle to bless such couples. For example, the Old Testament tells us that He did this in the cases of Abraham and Sarah, of Anna, the mother of the great prophet Samuel, and of Zachary and Elizabeth, the parents of St. John the Baptist. These are exceptional cases of course, but they show that the problem existed even among God's chosen people.

In our society, it is estimated that about one out of every ten couples remain childless in spite of their fondest hopes and desires.

Modern medical experts are devoting a great deal of attention to this problem. Just last year they held an international congress in Rome where their work was highly praised and blessed by Pius XII in a special audience.

According to medical opinion there are many possible reasons for childlessness, some known and some to be discovered. Contrary to traditional belief, doctors now tell us that it results from some condition in the husband about as often as in the wife, while some cases apparently result from a combination of various factors.

As you say, you have accepted your childlessness as the will of God. What bothers you is the attitude of so-called "good" Catholics toward your situation. Obviously, they are well enough informed to know that all cases of childlessness are not voluntary. Why do they maliciously insinuate that your case is?

The answer is simple, though distressing.

I suppose there is no clearer evidence of Original Sin than the persistent tendency of people to see evil rather than good in their fellowmen. This tendency is strong in the best of us.

Unfortunately, it is allowed to develop unrecognized and unchecked in some. Such people regard themselves as the self-appointed guardians of their neighbor's morals.

You just can't win against them. Like sharp-eyed harpies they size up the bride to be to see if she may be pregnant; if no children arrive after marriage, they nod knowingly toward the doctor. If pregnancies occur frequently, they leave no one in doubt concerning what they think of the husband.

THERE ISN'T MUCH one can do with these holier-than-thou critics. A sermon doesn't touch them because they spend their time applying it to their neighbors. Scripture says, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged," but they seem to feel so self-righteous that they do not fear the judgment.



The real tragedy of their situation is that they will never confess their sin because they refuse to recognize it.

YOU'LL JUST have to ignore their remarks. On the other hand, God has work for you to do.

Although He has not blessed

your marriage with children, He offers you other opportunities to serve Him. Use your time and talents to serve Him in your neighbor. Good deeds have many uses.

Like the priest and the doctor, avoid the temptation of being less than honest if it is to be spiritual.

BOOK SHELF

Temptations Of Christ

Sr. Margaret Teresa, Nazareth College

The Temptations Of Christ, by Gerald Vann, O.P., and P. K. Meagher, O.P. Sheed '58. Published Jan. 29th 127 pp. Available at all Catholic bookstores.

The temptations of Christ stand out in the mind of every Christian. They have a vigor and dark grandeur in proportion to the boldest assault of a rebel angel — that sweep from the stony desert to the pinnacle of the temple and thence to some top of the world where all power and glory can be seen.

They focus on the great temptations of men: to get bread, to get power, to get glory, to get pleasure, some way, any way, because you need it, to do something reckless, get results quick. If you get into it, God will help you. He loves you, to serve the Devil, and have everything pleasant for a while.

And they have the ringing answers of deity that comfort men in their dark hours: "Not by bread alone doth man live. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Begone, Satan. The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve."

YET WE HAVE not drawn from this opening move in our Lord's public life. His direct engagement with Satan, all He offers us in it. Father Vann and Father Meagher convince one fully of that as they explore these strange encounters.

We learn great things about our Lord, about the reality of His suffering, about His love for us. Inevitably we learn more about ourselves, this being Father Vann; he examines our conscience, our blindness, our perils.

We see the age-old aim of the Devil: to fool us about God, make Him seem unfair to us. The diabolical "twister" — that's what he is.

5 Making Marriage Click

Home Is Best Recreation Center

By MSGR. IRVING A. DEBLANC
(Director, Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C.)

George Bernard Shaw expressed a revolting theory which he never retracted.

He said that children at birth should be taken away from their parents. By that time, he said, parents have contributed all they can for their children.

And there was little attempt at humor. The children, he added, should then be put into nice sanitary homes and cut a wry smile completely from all further interference. That opinion is completely opposed to our own conviction that parents are the most effective teachers in the world.



Monsignor DeBlanc

PARENTS HOLD the children easy for better, or for worse, yes, as the saying is. A special trust of parents today is how much they have retained from the golden age of free time when a boy today is AWOL, it might very well mean now as during the war. "After Women Of Leisure"

If doctors were to advise for a patient with as little experience and training as some parents with a first child, doctors would be clanking from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Possibly the greatest organized crime in America today is that so few parents are prepared to be real parents.

And the schools of our country are in a state of confusion in regard to the schools who give a course in family education. Here is the world's most important job, and it is generally still being left to chance.

WITH THE fathers in America not generally filling their roles and with mothers terribly confused in theirs, it is no accident that our rate of juvenile crime. The Italian, for instance, have a ratio of 2% of their rate here is 35%.

Judge Samuel Leibowitz of Brooklyn made a special trip to Italy to study the "why" of this difference. He came to the conclusion that it is because the father in Italy is the disciplinarian. There he found respect for authority.

In Germany we also note that it is the father who personally directs the leisure time especially of his sons.

It is true that in America we have the automobiles to blame for taking youngsters to quick hideaways. We can also say that too much money is being

Prelates Make It To Boston In Rented Car

Boston (RNS) — Three prominent Catholic clergymen provided another chapter for "Peregrinus Casolinus," the tales of clerical travel told in The Priest, a monthly magazine published in Huntington, Ind.

INVOLVED IN the unusual episode were Cardinal Spellman of New York, Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston and the Rev. John F. Fitzgerald, C.S.P., of Boston, former vicar general of the Paulist Fathers.

They were fellow travelers in a hectic journey that ended with the midnight baptism of the grandchild of the cardinal's brother.

The pilgrimage began after the cardinals took part in a Mass commemorating the Paulist Fathers at terminal at St. Paul the Apostle church, New York.

CARDINAL SPELLMAN boarded a plane for Boston at 10:30 p.m. the night before. At 11:30 p.m. Cushing and Fitzgerald, A.D. three, however, were grounded in Hartford, Conn., because of fog conditions in Boston.

In Hartford, the required trip to an automobile, Cardinal Spellman, the only one of the three, with a house, did the driving to Boston over rain-slicked roads.

The cardinal, Archbishop of New York, a world famous traveler, described the Hartford-Boston trip as the longest one-mile behind a steering wheel in many years.

UPON ARRIVAL in Boston several hours behind schedule, Archbishop Cushing invited the cardinal to his residence. They were joined there by Mr. and Mrs. John Spellman and their new son along with baptismal sponsors, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Fitzpatrick of Milton, Mass.

Near midnight the cardinal baptized the infant James Francis Spellman.

Jesuits To Staff Burmese Seminary

Washington (NC) — Eight Jesuits will leave the next month for Rangoon, Burma, where they will staff that nation's first major seminary. They will be the first members of their order to enter Burma as missionaries.

The eight, five priests and three seminarians, are from Washington, studying the Burmese language and culture at Georgetown University.

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| Loans on Deposit | 2,345,678 |
| Cash on Hand and in Banks | 3,456,789 |
| U.S. Government Bonds | 4,567,890 |
| Stocks in Federal Home Loan Bank | 5,678,901 |
| Other Assets | 6,789,012 |
| Total Assets | \$17,962,827 |

| LIABILITIES | |
|--|---------------------|
| Members' Share Accounts | \$1,234,567 |
| Loans in Progress | 2,345,678 |
| Deposits in Course | 3,456,789 |
| Other Liabilities | 4,567,890 |
| Provision for Income and Franchise Taxes | 5,678,901 |
| Total Liabilities | \$17,268,225 |

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SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AT THE CENACLE

Spiritual exercises will be conducted at the Convent of Our Lady of the Cenacle, 693 East Ave., Rochester 7, during the month of February, as follows:

RETREATS:

- Jan. 31 Feb. 2—High School Students
Rev. James T. Malone, S.J.
- Feb. 7-9—U. of R. Newman Club
Rev. James S. Foley, S.J.
- Feb. 14-16—College Newman Clubs
Rev. Herbert J. Clancy, S.J.
- Feb. 19-20—Ash Wednesday Retreat
Rev. Lawrence B. Hill, S.J.
- Feb. 21-23—Sacred Heart Rosary Guild & Young Married Women—Rev. John L. Bonn, S.J.
- Feb. 28-30—Mercy High Alumnae
Rev. Brendan Connolly, S.J.

DAY OF RECOLLECTION:

- Feb. 13—Aquinas Mothers Club
Rev. Vincent Fullerton, C.S.B.
- Feb. 27—St. Thomas Rosary Society
Rev. Brendan Connolly, S.J.

EVENING OF RECOLLECTION:

- Feb. 18—Members of Cenacle Retreat League
Rev. Lawrence B. Hill, S.J.

GUILD MEETINGS:

- Feb. 4—1st Tuesday—St. Raphael's Guild—7:15 p.m.
Rev. Joseph L. Hogan
- Feb. 6—1st Thursday—Eucharistic Guild—9:15 a.m.
Rev. John F. Murphy, C.S.B.
- Feb. 12—2nd Wednesday—St. Regis Guild—after school
Rev. John J. Paret, S.J.
- Feb. 12—St. Lucy's Guild for the Blind—7:15 p.m.
Rev. James S. Foley, S.J.
- Feb. 17—3rd Monday—Our Lady of the Cenacle Guild Business Women—7:15 p.m.
Rev. John Hayes, S.J.

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