

# Kindness

By REV. LEO J. TRESE

If you have read the Acts of the Apostles in the Bible, you will recall the rather touching story of Cornelius, commander of the Roman garrison at Caesaria. Although he was a Gentile, Cornelius believed in the true God and gave much time to prayer and to acts of charity.

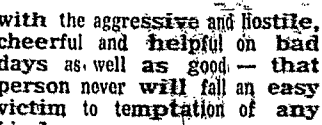
An angel appeared to Cornelius to say that God was pleased with his piety and that he should invite Simon Peter to come from Joppa to instruct him. Cornelius did so, and gathered all his family and friends together to listen to the Apostle. Peter came, and the essence of his sermon was that Jesus "went about doing good and healing all who were in the power of the devil; for God was with Him."

In that one sentence is contained for all of us, a summary of the Christian life. Jesus' inferior life was devoted to adoration of the Father Who was ever present to Him. His exterior life was devoted to ministering to the needs of others.

That is the blueprint of our own lives: an exterior life characterized by a sustained kindness towards others, stemming from an interior life in which the presence of God is never for long forgotten.

It may sound like a simple formula to say that habitual kindness is the chief mark of a true Christian. It is simple, in the sense that such kindness gathers together all the threads of religious obligations and releases us from the complicated network of "dos and don'ts, musts and must-nots. This is because, while almost anyone can be kind on occasion, it requires a high degree of selfishness, generosity and self-control to be uniformly kind to all persons at all times.

ANYONE who has the self-forgetfulness to be always alert to the burdens, the worries and the handicaps of others, plus the strength to be patient with the ignorant and stupid, gentle



with the aggressive and hostile, cheerful and helpful on bad days as well as good — that person never will fall an easy victim to temptation of any kind.

Yes, habitual kindness is a simple recipe for a fully Christian life, but that does not mean it is an easy one. Indeed, it will be impossible to maintain an attitude of unvarying kindness unless we imitate Jesus, however weakly, in His spirit of adoration; unless we learn to live, as we commonly express it, in the presence of God. It is only then that His will becomes our unflinching norm and guide.

To achieve this "fix" on God (as a navigator makes his "fix" on a star) is within the capacity of anyone, but it does require

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effort. The effort consists principally in the formation of the habit of THINKING about God occasionally. It is a matter of throwing God a quick glance from time to time with a brief (but earnest) movement of the heart.

At one time it may be, "My God, I love You." At another time, "My God, I adore You." Or, "Dear God, help me to love You as I should," or "Take me, God, and use me. I'm all Yours," or, "Forgive me, God, for not doing better," or, "Thank You, God, for all Your graces of this day."

A dozen (and with practice two or three dozen) swift but ardent addresses to God's presence need not interfere with the flow of our work. On the contrary, this periodic flicking of the eyes Godward can work an enormous transformation in our day, even to the point of increasing our efficiency. One such instant of recollection every hour (or even every half hour) would not consume a total of more than two or three minutes in the entire day. Yet these minutes could be more spiritually profitable than quadruple the time given to routine prayer only at the day's beginning and end.

Consistent kindness on the outside, springing from a spirit of adoration within, this is Christ's own blueprint for living, traced by His personal example.

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## Returning From Korea Post

CHAPLAIN (LT. COL.) GERARD J. GEFELL of the 36th Arty. Brigade at Osan, Korea, is shown as he sits out for a round of visits to the men of isolated missile sites. Father Gefell, a native of Rochester, leaves his Korean post this week for assignment to the United States Army Combat Development Command, Chaplain Agency, Fort Lee, Va. The chaplain is twin brother to Father Joseph G. Gefell, also an Army chaplain with the rank of lieutenant colonel stationed at Fort McPherson, Ga.

## 'Mousetrap' Jesuit, Two Laymen, Likely Saints

By RUNE P. THURINGER  
Stockholm — (NC) — A movement to promote the eventual canonization of two prominent Swedes who were martyred for their Catholic faith in 1624 is gaining rapid support among the tiny Catholic community of Sweden.

Interest in the case of Zachariah Anthonius and George Behr originated in Swedish Catholic intellectual circles. But it has broad popular appeal, as the story is crammed with all the intrigue of a fast-developing movie script.

THE FACTS in the Anthonius-Behr case were uncovered by the Swedish historian Jon Peter Wieselgren in the course of intensive research at both the Svea Hovratt library in Stockholm and the library of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome.

They were outlined by Father Joseph Getach, S.J., here at a celebration marking the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Academy of Stockholm. The talk by Father Getach—who has been spiritual adviser to students at the French Catholic school ever since its founding—spurred immediate and virtually unanimous support for a move to press for beatification of the martyrs.

Much of the documentation in the Anthonius-Behr drama comes from letters written by Father Henry Schacht, S.J., who himself played a major role. The Jesuit missionary went in December of 1623 from the Danish duchy of Schleswig across to the Lutheran stronghold of Sweden to search for

the Catholic remnant there and to provide pastoral care.

As Catholics had been banned in Sweden in 1617, Schacht entered the country disguised as a mousetrap salesman. He was seized by suspicious guards at Nykoping, however, and was taken to the royal court at Gripsholm castle to be questioned. The priest apparently was successful in deluding his interrogators, as he was freed.

But while at Gripsholm he found one of the secret Catholics he was seeking — George Behr, the secretary of the royal chancery. Through Behr he came to meet the mayor of the nearby town of Soderstje, Zachariah Anthonius, who was also a member of parliament. Both

men had become converts to the Catholic faith while studying on the continent.

Through Behr and Anthonius, Schacht came in contact with a third Catholic—Giovanni Battista Veraldi, an Italian lute player who was living in Stockholm. Schacht was back in Soderstje toward the end of Lent in 1624, and celebrating the Holy Week liturgy at the home of Anthonius. While he was there, soldiers came and seized him and Anthonius, and took them to King Gustavus II Adolphus in Stockholm.

Behr apparently was forbidden to flee to Denmark. But he was taken captive there and was later taken to Stockholm.

It was returned to light that the three had been betrayed by Veraldi, the musician. Behr had been having a secret affair with Veraldi's wife, and after Veraldi learned of it, he took revenge by turning informer.

Gustavus Adolphus was particularly suspicious of Catholicism, as his uncle, King Sigismund III of Poland, still claimed the Swedish throne, from which he had been deposed in 1599 for refusing to abandon his Catholic faith. So the Lutheran king rewarded the Catholic informer by giving Veraldi 200 silver dollars.

The king himself led in the inquisition of the three men, apparently trying to establish some tie-in between them and the Catholic Sigismund.

On April 19 and 20, the men were subjected to torture, but had nothing to confess other than that they were Catholic Christians. So the torture was stopped. But as Catholicism was treasonous under the 1617 decree, the three were sentenced to death.

Execution was delayed, however, and in the interim the Archbishop of Cologne interceded with Gustavus Adolphus for Father Schacht. As the archbishop was one of the seven Electors of the Holy Roman emperor, he was a prince of major influence, and the Swedish king acceded to his request on the stipulation that the Jesuit leave the country immediately.

hostility and denunciation that we will triumph over separations, but by habitual meekness, the spirit and soul of the mission of the Church, the spirit of the ecumenical movement.

Sponsored by the Italian Movement of Catholic Alumni, the study week in which Father Stransky took part attracted several prominent theologians and experts in the field of ecumenism.

Speaking at an Italian ecumenical study week, the Minnesota-born member of the unity secretariat pointed out that in India the number of births each year in non-Christian families is almost equal to the total number of Christians in the country — about 11 million.

It was in the confrontation of missionaries with this expanding, non-Christian population that the problem of the union of Christians first came up, he said.

"Protestants felt the urgency of presenting themselves united in evangelization, and formed the International Council of Missions in 1821," Father Stransky said.

"Today, Christ demands that his missionary Church face realistically the tragic reality of a disunited Christian family . . . The conversion of the world will not really begin until the Christian family is able to speak once more in such a way as to be able to be heard by the world, as in the time of the apostles, with a unified accent—clear and firm," Father Stransky said.

The ecumenical and missionary movements of today find their meeting point in the conviction that it is up to the entire Church to proclaim the whole Gospel to the whole world, he said. "Evangelization is the ecumenical theme par excellence."

The speaker stressed that ecumenism imposes a desire to take pleasure in all that is authentically Christian in the preaching and activities of Non-Catholic missionaries.

"We must do together everything our Catholic conscience does not oblige us to do separately," he said, giving as examples cooperation in theological formation of missionaries and in the study and spread of the Bible.

The minimum, he said, is "the respect due our brothers in Christ. We are not looking for personal triumph, but for triumph of Christ. It is not with

## Minority Status Faces Christians

Rome — (NC) — Because of the nature of the world's population increase, Christians by the year 2,000 will make up only 16% of the earth's population, according to Father Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P.

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