

Lent is for Being

High Quality Is Mark of True Christian

When I was a little younger I thought there was nothing corner than using examples from athletics to illustrate important points about life and religion. The longer I live, however, the more I find that such illustrations are very much to the point. This is especially so as my ability increases to avoid making distinction between life and religion.

Anyone who has ever watched Gale Sayers run with a football or Sandy Koufax pitch or Bobby Hull play hockey knows the difference between the ordinary excellent athlete and the one who gives everything that he has. Sometimes men like this are so good that they make their play appear effortless. Joe DiMaggio was a great example of that.

Nevertheless anyone watching them realizes that these really exceptional players will go to any extreme for an goal or whatever the object of the extra yard, a surer strike out, an extra game may be. It comes down to putting everything they are and everything they have on the line every time they start a play. That's the dif-

ference between a champion and an athlete who is simply talented and competent.

Some Try Harder
It's hard to say why some men try so much harder than others. Perhaps it's born into them. Perhaps it's a result of some special environmental factors. Perhaps someone taught it to them, although that's very doubtful. In any case it's very easy to spot this special championship quality.

What I'm leading up to is a simple thesis that this quality, in every phase of life, should be the mark of the true Christian. The true follower of Christ should always be trying for the extra yard that may mean the extra first down and just possibly the extra touchdown.

It's hard to imagine, one who really wants to follow Christ settling for anything less than the most he can give and the most he can get. It's hard to imagine the real Christian playing it safe. It's especially hard to imagine him "quitting while he's ahead."

And yet most of us seem to be terribly guilty of these things. We'll go all out in our "spiritual lives" just after we've committed some grave sin. Perhaps we're trying to erase guilt. Perhaps the Lord that we're worthy of the forgiveness that we know he has given us.

Every once in a while we'll get particularly zealous about some project and give a great deal to that. The zeal, like the fervor following repentance, never seems to last long.

Of course it's impossible to expect anyone to go all out one hundred percent of the time. Even Gale Sayers must stop to take a breath. A final observation in line with the athletic analogy, it's amazing how rarely these men who go all out are injured. I can remember quite well from my own playing days that the men who were just a little bit hesitant about throwing a block or a tackle or who checked their speed just a little bit as they ran near tacklers.

Perhaps it's our fear of life which

leads to a kind of hesitancy which in turn leads to occasional wounds and injuries which in turn makes us play a very cautious ball game with our spiritual lives and in the apostolate.

If I understand the message of Jesus in the New Testament at all it is simply: "give everything without reserve . . . without question." Of course, that's not a very easy invitation to accept. The only thing is, it promises rewards that athletics can never promise.

And so another attempt at Lenten prayer:

"Lord God, you tell me plainly to go all out, to give everything that I have every moment that I can. I know that this is something that I must do. I know in order to do it I must overcome fear, laziness, selfishness, all of the things that make me like other men . . . all of the things I must overcome in order to really be a man. The greatest mark of your manhood was your total giving. Help me to give totally in total imitation of you."

Final Article of Atlanta's Archbishop Hallinan

Following are excerpts from a paper prepared by Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan of Atlanta, Ga., chairman, U.S. Bishops Committee for the Liturgy just two weeks before his death on March 27. The Courier-Journal reprints it as a memorial to the spirit of an imaginative and scholarly pioneer in liturgical renewal.

Frankish-mass of the tenth century to the Missal of Pius V. Through the Sacred Constitution on the Liturgy, we are now emerging from a period of fixity and rigidity which was unnatural in the Church's life. The Constitution, as are so many other documents of our time, is not a completed blueprint to construct the edifice of the new liturgy. The Constitution is a declaration of principle with practical norms in a style of its own.

We must understand that this declaration of principle must be applied and adapted in our time, tested and evaluated with all healthy respect for anthropology as well as theology, and this can only be done through experimentation.

Experimentation is Essential
You already know that I feel a grass-roots approach to experimentation is absolutely essential. If our Liturgy is to be truly expressive and creative of a people dedicated to God.

At this time you know that our request to authorize a center where true experimentation could be initiated with local approval has been refused by Rome, but we cannot call a halt to our efforts to seek experimentation from the bottom up, to complement those experiments which we have received from the scholars and theorists. Each diocese, each diocese represented here must engender a creative spirit in its community which can produce and encourage the formulation of experimental rites.

We have assurance that our requests will receive prompt attention, but now these requests must come: From men who are pastors and working among the people, from individuals whom we release for training in the necessary scholarship, not only theological and liturgical, but also in the sociological and anthropological studies of our era. We must be willing to release men and women to engage in full-time study and research.

While these men are working and preparing, they must have our solid encouragement, not merely our permission. And our encouragement will extend not only to these men, but to all the people of God with whom we must communicate the spirit of renewal — to those who wish to experiment with the new

types of parish structures, to those musicians who are attempting to find contemporary forms which will be expressive of our age.

We must have our religious worshipping in our parish churches rather than apart in their own chapels. The voices of the laity must be heard through parish committees on worship which are composed of the adolescent as well as the adult as well as the Sisters who are vital members of our parish.

Periodically we hear that men are weary of liturgical discussion and this weariness is all the more reason for increasing an effective catechesis of our developing Liturgy. We must

recognize the gap in our liturgical practices throughout the country.

It is certainly true that we need divergence, but we cannot have deficiency for we are professional men and professional liturgists. Yet, this professionalism is not the conviction of us all as it should be. We can hold our rather solemn banquets with every detail socially correct and yet haphazardly celebrate that banquet which is of life-giving importance.

We have an already existing flexibility today which is not used because men say "It's not the law . . . It doesn't matter . . . It's not necessary." It is certainly not the law that we

have acclamations or responses after the Scripture readings, nor is it absolutely necessary that we have offertory processions and breads consecrated at the very Mass in which people participate.

Yet, all these elements can make today's Liturgy more meaningful and effective.

Festival Queen To Be Chosen

The Festival Queen for the 56th annual St. Anthony's Day celebration will be chosen April 28 at Holy Cross Hall.

Girls living in the Charlotte, Ga. and Irondequoit areas between ages 17 and 22 are eligible to compete for the honor. Information can be obtained by calling chairman, Joseph Marinucci, 633-8645.

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