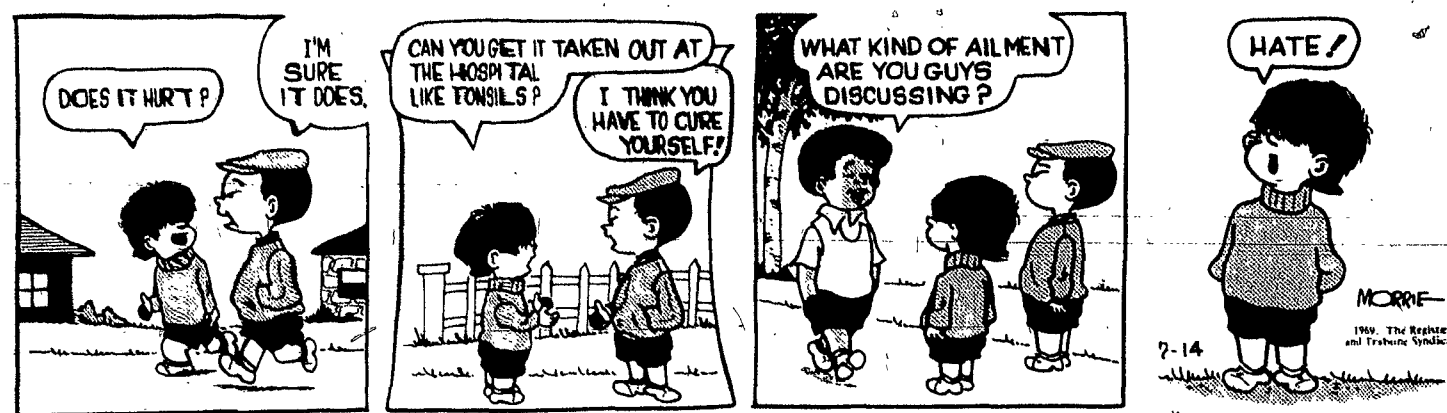


WEE PALS

by Morrie Turner



TEENAGERS WANT TO KNOW

By FATHER MARTIN, C.S.S.R.

Dear Readers,

About two or three times a year I present a potpourri of letters to give teenagers and adults an opportunity to express their views on various letters and answers that appear in this column. Many of the comments are extremely worthwhile. I'm only sorry I can't present all of the wonderful letters that I get.

Dear Father,

This young girl, Julie, fears even the word "death." If only she could begin to understand that death as well as birth was God's plan for life. Faith will play a big role in accepting this fact with a minimum degree of human fear.

I shall try to convey the message I received from listening to most beautiful and consoling words given by a minister at a Protestant funeral for a young girl which I attended recently. It was most enlightening and even I can accept the idea of death with less apprehension now.

We all fear death because it is the unknown. If we could go back to our beginning, when we were still in

our mother's womb, we would probably remember that we felt very safe and secure. We were quite content for things to remain just as they were.

When the time came to be born, and if we could have spoken, we probably would have said, "I do not want to be born," because this to us would have been the unknown. But the time comes and we have to be born.

We came to this world to a loving mother waiting for us with open arms. We found that this life on earth can be good. We go through life and sooner or later we think of death. We say, "I do not want to die." But again, the time comes when we have to die. We pass through the valley of darkness and on the other side, then, is God, our loving Father waiting for us with open arms. There we shall never fear again.

This is God's plan for life — we have to be born and we have to die to this world before we can be born again to a new and everlasting supernatural life.

As each phase of God's plan develops, we realize that it is getting to a higher and better plain and that the last phase will be the best and happiest.

Birth — is being born to human life.

Death — is being born to supernatural life.

Simone

Dear Father,

I just finished reading the letter from Matt in teenage problems. He asked, "Why do we have to tell how long it has been since our last confession? Do you have to tell how many times you committed a sin and if so, why?"

"And how do we know if we have made a good or bad confession?"

These questions were very typical of me right before I was to make my Easter duty. I didn't want to go to confession and I knew why. I hadn't been to confession for almost a year.

I used to tell myself that the Act of Contrition was quite enough to have God forgive my sins. My sins are not anything like murder or theft, but they are and were no less in my eyes after so long. I was scared to hear what the priest would say when I told him I hadn't been to confession for almost a year. My pride kept me from confessing my faults to God through the priest.

After those few seconds were over, my whole body was relieved of everything it had held for the last year. I asked Father and God to help me to prevent these sins. That confession did more good than all of that praying on my own and the Act of Contrition before each Communion.

Stephanie

Dear Father,

There is indeed an answer to long hair worn by boys. The answer can be found by looking at the Lord Jesus. Would we, the so-called Christians, ridicule our Lord because of His long hair? Would we call Him a "Kook," "Hippie," or many names that the boys are called? Yes, I believe most of us would.

We do not look first at the morals of our fellow man, but at his dress. I have two sons and both wore their hair long. To know these two boys, one knows God is alive for God must walk beside them every day. One son spent 15 months in Vietnam with the Infantry. He is home, healthy, and at peace with himself and the world.

The other son is now in service and to read his letters, I know he believes in God. So I have two boys who wear long hair and who live by the Ten Commandments. I am truly at peace and I must be in God's favor for I can not ride a long hair. I can stand any where on this earth and turn slowly around and see beauty in everything God has created. I can see beauty in everything my has

built out of God's creation.

I am a poor man as to material things, but no one on this earth is richer than I for God has blessed me with a wife, a daughter, two sons, and our lives have been filled with trust, respect, and above all love for each other.

In conclusion, let me say long hair grown on a boy's head is not a prop, but one of the graces God has given him. It is a part of God's creation. So when long hair is ridiculed we are laughing at God.

Mr. Gene T.



Photo by Citizen-Advertiser

Going-Away Gift
Father John Merklinger, second from right, received a check from St. Alphonus (Auburn) parishioners as a going-away gift at a reception in his honor. Presenting the gift is Mrs. Alfred E. McLaughlin, president of the Rosary-Altar Society. Others are Father Raymond Wuest, new St. Alphonus pastor, Fred Portello, president of the Holy Name Society, and Mrs. George Westlake, reception chairman.

Black Sisters' President Takes Final Vows

Pittsburgh — (NC) — Sister Martin dePorres Gray, the young black nun who organized and heads the National Black Sisters' Conference, pronounced final vows as a Sister of Mercy at her home parish of St. James in nearby Sewickley, Pa., (Aug. 28).

The profession took place during a Mass offered by Father Donald Clark of the Detroit archdiocese, president of the Black Clergy Caucus.

Red Cross Youth Trained to Lead

Nine students from Catholic high schools of the Rochester area have been attending the annual Red Cross youth leadership training school this week at Manlius.

Total attendance at the center, on the Manlius School campus, was 200, among them, 35 from Monroe County. The Catholic school delegates were Kathleen Barr and Patricia Byrnes of Nazareth, Susan Houters and Mary Beth Walz of Mercy; Debby Finnegan, St. Agnes; Margaret Marcille, Bishop Kearney; Mike Carlson, Cardinal Mooney; Norris Johnson, McQuaid; and Joseph Mooney, Aquinas.

St. Louis Approves Saturday Masses

St. Louis — (NC) — John Cardinal Carberry has announced that all parishes in the archdiocese of St. Louis may schedule Masses on Saturday at which parishioners may fulfill their weekly Mass attendance obligation.

Two out of three pastors here "felt such permission would be useful," Cardinal Carberry reported.

Air Force Honors Slain Viet Hero

S.Sgt. John L. Coon was a soldier's soldier. He died a soldier's death. Last week, nearly 15 months after he was lost in battle the Air Force gave his family four medals he earned through "sustained, outstanding and courageous service."

"He was not a one-time performer," the Air Force declared.

Seminary Gets \$131,769 Grant

The Rochester Center for Theological Studies last week received another boost toward its development — a \$131,769 grant from the Sealantic Fund, Inc. of New York City.

The fund, established by the late John D. Rockefeller Jr., supports theological education as one of its major interests. The theological center was formed last spring by Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Berkeley Hall, an episcopal seminary. St. Bernard's Seminary also is one of the incorporators of the center, which is associated with the University of Rochester.

Colgate Rochester's President Gene E. Bartlett said the fund will help establish a "theological center of national significance."



S.SGT. COON

Sgt. Coon was flight engineer and gunner aboard a six-man helicopter in Vietnam. He died with the rest of the crew when their vehicle crashed against a mountain and exploded in May 1968. For eight months, he was listed as missing.

Some relatives still consider him "missing," says his widow, Geraldine Roland Coon. Not

she; from the first report, that he had disappeared in flight, she had felt that he would not be found alive.

"Still, even though I thought I was ready, it was an awful shock," she said, when the death report finally came last January. Then, in March, the families of the six crewmen gathered in St. Louis for a common funeral. The men were buried together in the St. Louis National Cemetery.

Recently, an Air Force officer delivered the medals to Mrs. Coon and to the soldier's parents, Floyd Coon of Phelps and Mrs. Thelma Coon of Bay Street. The big one, the Distinguished Flying Cross, he had expected, for a mission in April, three weeks before his death. The Air Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart were added.

"When you talk to people you realize that many have problems like yours, and worse than yours."

before joining the Air Force for Vietnam duty in December 1967. Following his Coast Guard hitch, he was a Maryknoll brother for three years before resuming the military life.

He and Geraldine were eighth grade classmates at Sacred Heart Cathedral school. He went to Aquinas and she to Nazareth Academy, and they were only acquaintances until 14 years later. After their marriage, they lived in Germany for two years, then in Michigan and Florida.

Speaking of bringing up the children — Marguerite, 6; Joseph, 4, and 2-year-old Jeanette — Mrs. Coon praises the Catholic Widowed Parent Club that meets at St. Theodore's. The club is "invaluable" to her, it was just what she needed, she says, to help her cope with a new way of life.

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Deaths

Mrs. Mackey

Mass repose of the soul of Mrs. Pauline A. Mackey, 267 Sanford St., Rochester, was celebrated Wednesday in St. Patrick's Church, Watertown. Mrs. Mackey died Aug. 24, 1969. Survivors include four daughters, Sister Thomas Marie, RSM, Mrs. Robert (Margaret) Lanoue of Wheaton, Ill., Mrs. Jack (Joan) Lee and Miss Gertrude Mackey, two sons, Thomas J. and Paul F. Mackey; three sisters, Mrs. William (Marion) Mulcahy, Sister Mary Perpetua, RSM, Sister Mary Arcadius, RSM, two brothers, Father Frederic O'Connor, S.J., and Joseph O'Connor, 12 grand-children, and several nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Mackey was a member of the Rosary Society of St. Boniface Church.

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