

Balancing the Books

# Priest for Tomorrow

By Father John S. Kennedy

Many, many priests who have no intention of leaving the priesthood, are puzzled, sometimes bewildered, as to their role in the Church during the years ahead. They want to be of maximum service to the cause, but wonder what is to be required of them and how best they can fulfill a solemn obligation which they cherish and intend to honor. Very little is being written that is helpful to them.

Father Andrew Greeley has sought to meet their need in "New Horizons for the Priesthood" (Sheed and Ward, 64 University Place, New York, N.Y. 10003, \$4.50). He does not pretend to read the future. He maintains that "the priest creates the future because he believes in the future and transmits this faith to his people." His book deals with the virtues that are required of men living and working in a dramatic transition, men struggling simultaneously with continuity and discontinuity.

The first virtue which Father Greeley discusses is self-respect. Here the judicious middle-of-the-road attitude exemplified throughout the book comes immediately into view. The author deprecates the warped old notion that a kind of false humility is essential to the priest ("I am nothing, worthless, deserving only contempt").

Crippling self-loathing, self-hatred is the likeliest result of such a point of view. Self-respect is a first requisite of mental and emotional balance.

On the other hand, Father Greeley is by no means an advocate of the exorbitant self-fulfillment which many now demand. He sees this excess as a kind of self-defecation. What it calls honesty may actually be aggressiveness, and what it calls relating to the people may be mere exhibitionism. The "spontaneous homily" which is advocated in the name of self-fulfillment can be blithering nonsense.

He favors the true self-fulfillment, based on realistic self-respect, and issuing in responsible behavior, "behavior that is responsible to one's own best instincts and also to the rights and selfhood of those who are around us." Such self-fulfillment is orderly, disciplined, and fruitful.

Father Greeley insists that the laity wants priests to be priests, full-time and not part-time. They do not favor, he has found, the concept of a priest no different from themselves

except in occasional leadership of the assembly during the liturgy. The priest who accepts that idea is, according to Father Greeley, repeating a theology that is at least five years out-of-date.

If the priest begins to live up to the requirements which Father Greeley lays out for him, he will undoubtedly be engaged full-time. For he must unify and lead God's people; his ministry must be broad, multifaceted, and intensive. Its proper preparation and performance will fill and overflow all his hours and days.

Father Greeley sees the priest as a special kind of leader. He is an expressive leader, one who exemplifies an ideal, and moves the minds and hearts of men. He is a master of human relationships and helps in the improvement of the quality of such relationships. He has faith in the vitality of the message of which he is the bearer and in his own validity as its bearer to others. He conveys love.

Just as did the spiritual director in yesterday's seminary, Father Greeley maintains that the successful exercise of the priesthood is impossible without prayer. But his explanation of prayer is far different from what we were accustomed to. Different, but not arbitrary or empty. The chapter on this subject should be especially useful.

The peculiar merit of Father Greeley's book is its hard-headed wisdom. The author is highly qualified in social science, and from that and related fields he brings much sound knowledge to bear on religion and especially, in this instance, the priest and the priesthood. He is sharply aware of much that has been mistaken and distortive in past practice, and he is outspoken in his criticism of anything of the sort. But he is also cool and unsparing in his diagnosis of recent and current popular practices which are as mistaken and distortive as ancient abuses. And he is justly appreciative of what is basic, unchanging, and unchangeable.

### FIFTY YEARS

April 27 is the golden wedding date for Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stone of Arnett Boulevard. They are the parents of Mrs. Donald Winslow and Mrs. Richard Ensmann of Rochester and Mrs. David Williams of Portland, Ore. The Stones have 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

# 'Children' Questions a World of Games

By THE MISSION SINGERS

"Children would jump and play. You'll be men and women some day." Joe South, who wrote and recorded this song, has said it for us all: deep down, we know that growing up is what life is all about, but it's growing up that most of us would rather not do.

"Then you'll have to leave your world of make-believe." There's a child in everyone, a child that holds on for dear life to its world of make-believe. No matter how old we get, we'll always have this little child in us. We can love that little dreamer, but if we let it take over, watch out.

A little girl, six-year-old Pamela, has a habit of hitting people to say she likes them. Even though we tell her that this is not the best way to win friends and influence people, still she knows no other way to express her feelings. If she doesn't want to learn other ways, she'll be a child long past age six.

Tim is a 16-year-old fellow in our neighborhood. He has a native ability to invent "emergencies" which manage to prevent his getting to school regularly.

Once, a "flash fire" in his sister's house required his whole day's attention, when actually it was a book of matches that had caught fire and burned out quickly. Another time, a five-mile-per-hour automobile "crash" demanded a detailed hospital checkup of his "twisted back." Every absence, every day of hooky, had its own special emergency to justify it.

School might not be the best answer but at least it was more real than his alternatives. But he quit school a few weeks back. "You'll have to leave your world of make-believe?" Not Tim.

There's a man in our neighborhood who's 66 years old. For the past 40 years, a day hasn't gone by when less than 90% of the neighborhood's alcoholic consumption has gone down his gullet.

He will never stop. When

### KLEMS NOTE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. Clayton A. Klem, Victor dairy farmers, celebrated the 50th anniversary of their marriage April 21 at a dinner party given by their daughters, Mrs. Robert Weigert and Mrs. William Marvin of Macedon. The Klems are members of St. Patrick's parish, Macedon. They have six grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

# THE MUSIC BAG

## CHILDREN

Children would jump and play, You'll be men and women some day. Then you'll have to leave your world of make-believe Now children, young, ever children.

Children need someone who understands, Children need someone to hold their hands, To cheer you when you're sad, to spank you when you're bad. Children, naughty, haughty children.

Pride goes before destruction, the Holy Spirit goes before the Fall. Don't you know that we're all children, and it's all for one, and one for all.

Children call each other names, Children playing grown-up games, And the thing that's really sad: we lose the faith we had When we were children, loud, proud children.

Children who think that they are grown, Children with children of their own. From the cradle to the grave, why must we all behave like Children, lost, lonely children.

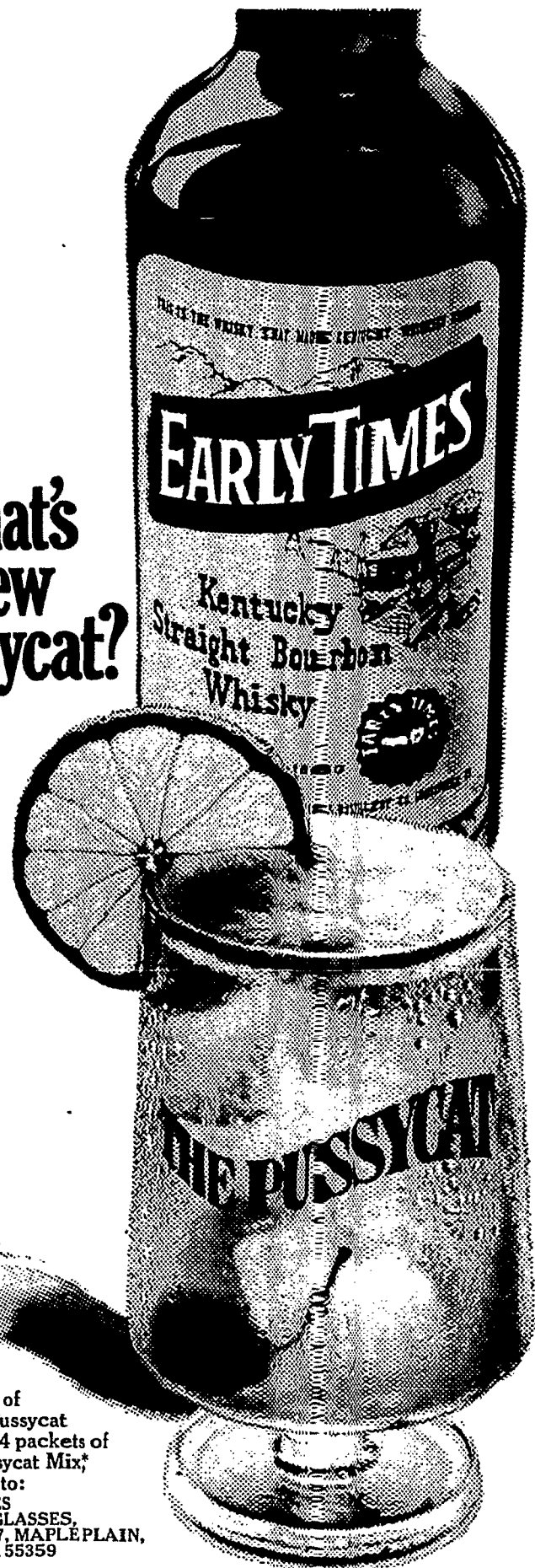
(Published by Lowery Music, BMI)

you've been a child for 66 years, you don't readily change. Sometimes you don't change at all. Three examples — six, 16, 66 — show that the song's question is real indeed: "From the cradle to the grave, why must we all behave like children, lost, lonely children?"

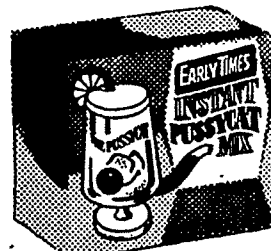
Joe South asks the question sorrowfully. But his sorrow is tempered by the challenge he offers us all at the beginning of his song: "You'll have to leave your world of make-believe. Now." How many people will accept that challenge?

(Catholic Press Features)

What's new Pussycat?



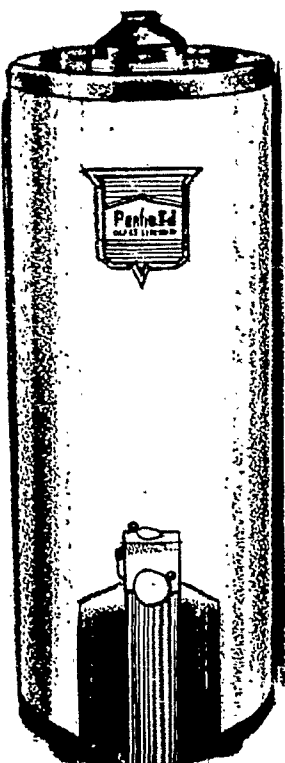
To get a set of 4-10% oz. Pussycat glasses and 4 packets of Instant Pussycat Mix, send \$2.95 to: EARLY TIMES PUSSYCAT GLASSES, P.O. BOX 377, MAPLE PLAIN, MINNESOTA 55359



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