

All in the Family

Babysitting
No Easy Thing

By Sarah Child



Jean Kerr said it first and said it best with her book, "Please Don't Eat the Daisies."

The mother of five sons and a daughter pointed out in that collection of stories about her family that no matter what precautions she took to keep her children in line she was constantly thwarted simply because she could not anticipate what new forms of diversion would occur to them.

After the last few weeks of what I choose to call the battle of the babysitters I know of what she speaks.

The first night I began to realize that the babysitters we engage on an average of once a week were having something of a rough time with our three (ages 5½, nearly 3 and 7 months) came about a month ago.

We walked in to find papers scattered high and low, three games mixed well and heaped in the middle of the floor and the baby's windup swing folded and plopped on its side.

Sorry, said the sitter, explaining she'd already straightened up three times.

I assured her it was okay, took her home and then found out from the 5-year-old that the sitter had put the swing on the floor to keep the three-year-old from aiming it at her head a second time.

The next week I went to pick her up and told her I was sorry about the swing. It had been put in the basement since it no longer worked anyway.

She smiled and said not to worry, that when she knew she was coming to our house she had removed her contact lenses for the evening!

"Let them play outside until it's time for bed," I instructed,

thinking that would solve the destruction of the living room.

It was not until the next morning that I found the broken applesauce jar in the garbage can and not until the following afternoon before neighboring parents brought me reports about finding dried applesauce in their offspring's hair and ears. It was a full 48 hours before the 5-year-old admitted she'd accepted a dare to smash the jar on the driveway. The applesauce fight, she said, had been spontaneous, and no, nobody had got cut.

The next week, the regular babysitter had gone west and we brought in a new sitter who didn't know us. For five minutes my list of rules and regulations for the children and her own protection flowed forth.

Four hours later we arrived home to find our son sitting upright on the sofa sound asleep clad only in his bathing suit. The sitter seemed non-committal but anxious to get home so I paid her and dropped her off.

It was our oldest who alerted us to the fact that again the evening had been an unusual one with the baby-sitter's family arriving en masse and staying for a long time.

After a conference with a neighbor who had seen something of what had gone on, I got my nerve up and called the sitter's mother to apologize. I was sorry, I said, about the macaroni salad thrown about the kitchen. And it was unfortunate that the 3-year-old had decided to occupy the baby's crib after she had finally gone to sleep.

Yes, he had done those things before on occasion I confessed, but bringing in the garden hose to water the living room rug was an absolute first.



Mutual Congratulations at Hospital

Two Daughters of Charity, who staff St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, marked milestones there Aug. 6. Sister Helen Martin (left) of Baltimore, Md., head of the dietary department, noted her golden jubilee in the Order at a Mass celebrated by retired Bishop James E. Kearney in the hospital chapel, and Sister Clarisse Corrcia of New Bedford, Mass., serving in nursing department, pronounced her vows in the Order.

Economist Foresees
'A World of Misery'

Rome — (RNS) — Economist Barbara Ward foresees a decade of crises, a world of despair and a seedbed of revolt, outrage and civil wars.

Miss Ward's gloomy predictions are spelled out in a book written for the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, of which she is a member.

Entitled "The Angry Seventies," the book grapples with the problems of development in the next ten years, and the contribution the Catholic Church is called on to give to their solution.

The British economist sees the dire crises of the seventies as rooted in the expansion of urban areas in developing countries, in advance of any system-

atic movement toward modernization, as well as in the "population explosion."

Linking the population growth to the lack of sufficient food production in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Miss Ward foresees "landless men on the fringes of villages, and jobless men on the fringes of cities being driven to despair." The gap between a hopeful life and poverty, she says, will continue to grow, and "so will the fight for survival."

Her view encompasses "a world of misery spreading from Chicago ghettos to the slums of Calcutta. The rich and comfortable" will have "reached their goal," while "their neighbors rot in poverty," she says.

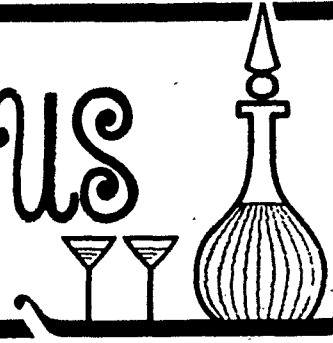
Conductor Died
A Catholic

Cleveland — (RNS) — A religious dimension not known before has been added to the life of famed Cleveland orchestra conductor George Szell.

Although he had been born of Jewish parents 73 years ago, he received the last rites of the Roman Catholic church before his death on July 30.

Friends were unaware of any particular faith of Dr. Szell. None of his biographies, including Who's Who in America, mentioned his religion. However, a Cleveland Orchestra spokesman said that Dr. Szell was converted to Catholicism five or six years ago.

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