

On the Line  
2,000 Years  
Later

By Bob Considine



He had grown a bit older through the nearly 2,000 years. He had been working too hard.

His mother was the first to notice the gray around His temples. Quietly, firmly, she suggested that He get away for a spell, and just before His birthday as a man the suggestion was accepted.

He went to the window of His study one clear night and looked things over, seeking a vacation spot. There were billions of places to tempt Him, but after a bit, a distant memory stirred itself, and searching the littered sky, He found a tiny, luminous cinder amid an obscure constellation out on the end of creation—Earth.

His mother was a bit vexed by His choice of a place to spend a holiday.

"The hotel situation is bad there," she reminded Him. "Don't You remember all that trouble we had getting reservations?"

He laughed a little in His kindly way and assured her that nearly 2,000 years can make a lot of changes in man's hostility to man. She went off to pack for Him, and pretty soon Michael, the swiftest of the archangels, walked in.

"I heard You're going on a trip," the archangel said. "I'll fly You down. In that way I'll be handy in case You need me."

"No thanks, Michael," He said. "I'll get down, all right. Besides, I've been wanting to try some of the transportation down there. Primitive, isn't it?"

He arrived in New York City, bought some clothes that conformed to what the natives were wearing, and hopped a jet for Gold Beach, Fla. The travel poster had looked so nice.

An odd thing happened at the first hotel. "All booked," the clerk said, after a snobbish glance. It was that same way at the next four places, but the doorman at the last place took an interest in Him. "Your best bet is a motel, Mac," the man said. "They're not so holy-toity."

He did, indeed, find a room at a motel; a room and, astonishingly, an invitation to cocktails and dinner.

It was a grand party in a spacious old home and He found it stimulating. Nobody caught His name, but He passed that off as one of the idiosyncrasies of this odd little planet.

Everything would have gone nice, He supposed later, if the

talk had not turned to "Where are you from?"

"Bethlehem," He said. "It's a small place."

"Bethlehem," His host repeated. "Spent a lot of time there when I was in steel. Fine town."

"Then we moved to a town named Nazareth and finally to Jerusalem," He said.

To His wonder, that portion of the room fell silent. The host was the first to recover. He boomed for another round of drinks, took the stranger by the arm and escorted Him to a sitting room.

"That's very interesting . . . Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem," he said, lighting a cigar. "What's your profession?"

"I was a carpenter in those days," He said, with a smile. "Then I sort of went on the road, as you say."

"Salesman?"

"Yes, I guess you could call it that."

The host thought for a long time. "I hope You won't be offended," he said finally. "But we've got to face facts in Gold Beach. Are You Jewish?"

"Yes," He smiled.

The host wheezed unhappily. "We were counting on You being an extra man at dinner at the Wampum. But I'm sorry, it can't be done. There's a rule, see? Don't blame me, I didn't make it. If I bring You, and they find out, I'll be asked to resign from the club. It's the oldest and best club around here. And we've got to live here, see?"

The guests crowded out on the curb and piled into their convertibles and limousines. The host stayed behind, momentarily, and put his arm around the stranger's shoulders.

"No hard feelings?" the man asked.

"No hard feelings," He answered warmly.

Then He was alone in the now-darkened street. The air was tender in the palms. They reminded Him of the palms He had known as a child, and the palms He had known for one brief Sunday, as a man.

"Well, a little more time," He sighed. Then He clapped on His new hat, looked up at the star-studded heavens and cupped His hands around His mouth.

"Michael!" He shouted at the top of His lungs. "Oh, Michael!"

**HOLY FAMILY ROSARIANS TO MEET**

The Rosary Society of Holy Family parish will meet at 8:15 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13, following church services at 7:45. Richard W. Friday will be guest speaker.

**COMMUNION BREAKFAST FOR OLPH MEN**

The Holy Name society of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will receive communion at the 8:30 a.m. Mass Jan. 10. Breakfast will be served in the parish center.

**CARD PARTY**

St. Cecilia's Ladies Guild will sponsor a card party at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, reservations through Mary Hull, 342-2334. There will be no regular meeting this month.

Courier-Journal

**BOWLING PARTIES**

The St. Philip Neri Women's Club will sponsor a bowling party for adults Jan. 30 at Dewey Gardens. Tickets may be obtained from Mary Pollifrone, 266-7311, before Jan. 11.

Donna Sculli is chairman of a bowling party for children, aged nine and up, that will be held Jan. 16.

**JACQUELINE du PRE**

Jacqueline du Pre — the extraordinary British cellist who startled the musical world with her sensational debut before she'd reached age 20 — will play a recital in Eastman Theatre on Monday, Jan. 11 at 8:15 p.m.

# Who Becomes the Alcoholic?

(Last in a Series)

Chemical aspects of alcoholism provide an exciting subject for future study. Fortunately, however, effective and tested methods of rehabilitation are already available, and have proven highly successful in literally hundreds of thousands of cases. The key to rehabilitation for today's alcoholic rests largely in the hands of his fellow citizens. It is they who must realize how impossible it is for an alcoholic to fight against his addiction without competent professional help. They must see to it that he gets such help as early as possible.

His friends, his family, his neighbors, and his boss (especially) must try to understand and help. The National Council on Alcoholism regards the fostering of such moral support, on the community and labor-management scenes, as one of its most important functions.

A provision for a coordinated employe alcoholism program has been written into the contracts of the United Steel Worker's Union with the major steel producers. Similar agreements are saving the lives of company executives and union members (while increasing profits) all over the country.

Like many other diseases that get worse by degrees, alcoholism is difficult to spot but easiest to treat in its early stages. The line that separates heavy drinking from alcoholism is a thin one. Yet the physician, who should be an expert in the detection of all diseases, is often poorly equipped by his early training to detect the early signs. This was brought out at the Medical Session of the 1970 Meeting of the National Council on Alcoholism.

Dr. William R. Willard, Dean of the University of Kentucky School of Medicine said, "The student has not learned to experience the satisfaction of dealing constructively and successfully with an alcoholic patient."

What kind of people are alcoholics? Many of them are women. Few alcoholics are of the "Skid Row Bum" variety less than 5 per cent.

A high proportion of alcoholics are well-off in a financial way, and many hold high paying jobs, which they are gradually forced to neglect as their disease gets worse, unless they are among the lucky few who receive treatment.

Many alcoholics have a lot of "strength of character" by anybody's standards. Yet they become alcoholics. Why? Much

work remains to be done to disclose the answer. Alcoholics have in common only the fact that their daily intake of the drug — alcohol — exceeds their body's ability to handle it effectively.

All of us who drink socially — even if we are quite moderate drinkers — could be prone to the disease of alcoholism. For this reason, if for no other, we must all try to help establish a climate of public opinion which recognizes alcoholism for what it is — a disease — and to support the establishment of expanded research and treatment facilities.



**Peace Prize Winner**

Mother Theresa (right) shown distributing medicines to the poor in Delhi, India, is the first recipient of the \$25,000 Pope John XXIII Peace Prize. She is a Yugoslavia-born nun, who, 20 years ago, founded the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, India. (RNS)

ARE YOU READING  
THE  
COURIER  
PAY FOR IT  
— PLEASE —  
AT YOUR PARISH CHURCH  
USE THE MONTHLY ENVELOPE  
DESIGNATED FOR THE  
COURIER-JOURNAL