

If you've already bought all the Bishop Sheen tapes and all other similar items of pre-packaged religion and you still have money to spend, I have the book you've been waiting for. It's the recently published "Catholic Encyclopedia" by Robert and Virginia Broderick. For \$24 you can purchase this lavishly illustrated, two-inch thick volume of Catholic facts and lore.

People (and priests) who are looking for more "content" in religious text books will also find this book the likely answer to their hopes, much better than reprint editions of the old Baltimore Catechism.

Here in this husky volume you will find such gems as these:

* In making the sign of the cross, say the words "and of the Holy" while touching the left shoulder; and the word "Spirit" while touching the right shoulder. (And the word "Spirit" rather than "Ghost" shows you that this is really authentic post-Vatican II material.)

* There are two kinds of concupiscence: the good kind and, alas, the bad kind. (And since most of us have the latter, that's why we still need individual confession.)

* There are nine fruits of the Holy Spirit listed by St. Paul. The Church later

added three more, which St. Paul either didn't know about or maybe forgot. (I could never remember more than nine either.)

* The "churching of women" is the blessing given after childbirth — unless the child is illegitimate. (Although the 756-page, 1976 edition of the Roman Ritual no longer contains any such churching rite — which maybe says something about the Vatican's opinion about kids these days.)

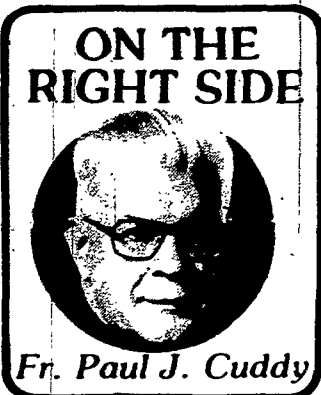
* The first 35 popes were not only infallible but holy, too. It was poor Pope Liberius (352-366) who was the first pope not to be canonized. (Although he might be included in All Saints, as are even some lay people.)

* The list of patron saints is also updated. St. Januarius is patron of blood banks. (His blood liquifies in Naples, Italy, on his feast day.) St. Martin de Porres is the patron of hairdressers. (No clear reason for that.) St. Stephen remains the patron of stonemasons. (He was the first Christian martyr — stoned to death, you know.)

* Purgatory is, an eschatological idea. Its importance, therefore, is its theological significance rather than its factual existence. (Which is comforting to ponder at a requiem Mass.)

* People who believed that Christ was a lesser God sent by the Supreme God were called Socinians (Socinus, d. 1604) or "Polish Brethren." (Ethnic jokes are nothing new after all.)

What amazes me most about a book like this is not the hundreds of items like these it lists but the fact that there are still so many people (and priests) who think this is really what religion is all about.



To Florence Young Cuddy, widow of my brother George

Today is Monday of Holy Week. I won't be home until Easter mid-week. This letter will keep the home front informed that Uncle Paul is alive and bursting with energy for Christ and His Church. It has been a busy past week.

Father MacNamara of Hornell engaged me to fill in for him March 26-27 week-end; while he would be on retreat with the Hornell retreatants at Notre Dame Retreat House. That is an unusual pastoral wrinkle, but a good one. There were two large groups, Hornell with 58, and St. Andrew's, Rochester, with a sizeable group.

The Redemptorists have a nice custom of inviting the priests of the retreatants' parishes to have dinner Saturday noon with their men. So I decided to join them en route to Hornell, since confessions would not begin until 4 p.m. A smiling Father Bernard Dollen, the newly ordained Father Firpo, and Father Win Kellner whom you know from his St. Alphonsus days were there from St. Andrew's. St. Ann's associate, Father Lew Brown — he broadcasts an attractive "Father Brown's Sunday School" each Sunday over several radio stations — and my friend Father Sturmer were there from Hornell. We

had a happy get-together. I wonder where some people get the idea that priests are a lonely group. Such is not my experience or observation of any priests who work with zeal.

The week-end at Hornell was dandy. The people there took me in as one of their own during my five years at St. James Mercy Hospital; so it was like Old Home Week.

Are you familiar with MTC (Make Today Count)? It is like the AA's, a group support, but the object is cancer patients; and their families too. Mrs. Norine Miller of our parish, mother of 16 children, came down with cancer about three years ago. When it struck, she emerged from an almost exclusively domestic life to become a civic leader in cancer concerns. From her own experience she discovered that frequently patients are up a tree on how to cope with cancer. She also found that many doctors, nurses, families and friends are up the same tree. Then she learned about MTC chapters which were cropping up in the country under the inspiration of a patient, Orville Kelly. With the help of other patients and interested friends, including her husband and children, she co-founded the Rochester Chapter of MTC.

Mrs. Miller and a Websterite, Mrs. Winifred Schuchardt gave talks to nurses and others, explaining the MTC program. The talks were taped for a cassette recorder. I have duplicated the talks, and sent them to strategic people, including Sister Louise Dolan of St. Joseph's in Elmira; Sister Olivia at St. Mary's, Rochester; and some nurses in Rochester and Clifton Springs hospitals. MTC, like AA, is not a religious group.

The thought came: "Why not in Hornell?" So I phoned Sister Augustine Malley,

who is the Pastoral Assistant at the St. James Hospital. She also teaches science at the Nursing School. I hate to see capable, experienced Sisters abandoning the teaching profession; and am glad Sister A. continues to teach as well as pastorize. She was out, but I left the MTC tape with organist John Bartell to give to his wife Nancy, who teaches at the nursing school, to give to Sister Augustine. Now let's hope that something fructifies from all the commotion.

The applications for the Ireland-Scotland-London-Lourdes trip of May 14-28 are coming in very well. Several old faithfuls have already signed up. Have you considered joining the Tour? or are your bones still bothering you? Do think about it, and I hope you will come.

Will you tell that family who have quit going to Mass because of that scandalous

20 minute Sunday Mass given to the people not to stop going to Mass, but to go to another parish where the liturgy is less streamlined? Quote St. Teresa of Avila: "All things are passing. God only is changeless." I sympathize with their indignation, but stopping Mass is not the answer.

Well, that's all for now. God willing, I will see you and all the family next week.

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