NOTE TO USERS

Page(s) not included in the original manuscript are unavailable from the author or university. The manuscript was microfilmed as received

97-99, 103-125

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI®

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE PRIEST

IN

MORLEY EDWARD CALLAGHAN

by

Reverend Louis George Dupuis

of the Diocese of Hearst, Ontario.

Thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa through the Department of English as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

College of St. Thomas
St. Paul 1, Minnesota, U.S.A.

1963

CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Louis George Dupuis is a priest of the diocese of Hearst, Ontario. He was born at Jogues, Ontario. He was granted the degree of Bachelor of Arts by the University of the Sacred Heart, Bathurst, New Brunswick, in June 1949. He holds the Bachelor's and Licentiate degrees in theology; both degrees were granted by the University of Ottawa in May 1951 and June 1953 respectively. He was ordained a priest by the Most Reverend Louis Levesque, Bishop of Hearst, Ontario, on June the fourth 1953.

CONTENTS

FORWARD

Long before I settled on a topic for this dissertation in the spring of 1962, Morley Callaghan had won world wide acclaim as a writer. Unfortunately, Callaghan is still largely unknown to his fellow Canadians. My purpose in this thesis is to make known to a wider circle of countrymen this author whose roots sink deep in true Catholicism.

I also feel that a wider acquaintance with Callaghan would result in a deeper appreciation of the beauty of Christianity on the part of the reading public. His love of charity in the highest sense, his complete detestation of hypocrisy, useless conventions and mediocrity in the spiritual life cannot fail to impress any serious reader.

During the development of this subject, I received help of many kinds from various sources. I am indebted first of all, to Dr. A.P. Campbell, Associate Professor of English at the University of Ottawa, who has been my teacher and my guide in English Literature. The highest compliment I can pay him is to say that I believe Morley Callaghan would applaud his charity.

I am also deeply indebted to Dr. Emmett O'Grady, chairman of the English department, for his valuable suggestions and his great generosity in lending me various

material written by or about Morley Callaghan. A special word of thanks is also due to Dr. Dalton McGuinty, Dr. Paul Marcotte, and Father L.A. Cormican, all three members of the department of English of the University. I do wish also to thank a host of kindhearted and energetic friends who have assisted in many ways with the preparation of this thesis.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO CALLAGHAN'S WORKS

The facts of Morley Edward Callaghan's life account for his growing literary stature as one of Canada's foremost writers. Born in Toronto in 1903, Callaghan was graduated from St. Michael's College, studied law at Osgood Hall, and was admitted to the Bar in 1928. He married Loretta Florence Dee in 1929 and went to Paris. He wrote while he was in Paris, but it is in his native land that he creates his best work. Now in his sixties, Callaghan lives the life of a working novelist in Toronto.

While still a student at St. Michael's College, Toronto, he worked for the Toronto "Daily Star," first as a reporter one full summer, then three afternoons a week. During this period he wrote his first short story, "A Girl with Ambition,"[1] a work which not only demonstrated his awareness of the artistic qualities which could establish him as a writer, but also showed his keen alertness in comprehending the social problems of his time. Simple in plot and structure, "A Girl with Ambition" nevertheless forecasts the sharp scrutiny which its author

---

[1]First published in This Quarter; Republished in Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959.

himself describes, quite simply, his formulation of an artistic creed:

> I remember showing it("A Girl With Ambition") to a Varsity character who looked at it and thought it was written a -- well, not in a literary style. I knew he thought that I didn't have very much future as a writer. But you see, the great thing is to write without any sense of literature. It was just a matter of bringing my mind into contact with the material and saying what I wanted to say. That's a wonderful way to write.[1]

This "contact with the material" has since served Morley Callaghan as the artistic basis of his work. His novels and short stories have proven his artistic creed time and again.

While he worked on the Toronto "Daily Star" Callaghan chanced to meet Ernest Hemingway, who at the time was on the staff of the same newspaper. As he said later, "I was very fortunate in that I ran into him."[2] Assuredly this meeting with Hemingway was a fortunate event in Callaghan's life for he established a friendship with the American author which was to prove very helpful. Hemingway showed interest in the Canadian, read what he had already produced, and encouraged the young man with a prophetic statement: "You're going to be a great writer."[3]

In 1928, a year before he left for Paris, Callaghan

---

[1]Robert Weaver, "A Talk with Morley Callaghan," Tam, Vol. 7, Spring, 1958, p. 4.

[2]p. 10.

[3]p. 10.

published his first novel, A Strange Fugitive,[1] followed a year later by A Native Argosy.[2] While his first novel shows a remarkable insight in the nature of man, Callaghan was at that time best known for his short stories. His first ones were published in the American-owned Paris magazines "The Quarter" and "Transition." He also wrote for Ezra Pound's periodical "The Exile," edited in Italy. For twelve years in succession his stories were included in Edmond O'Brien's "Best Short Stories." While he was in Paris, he mingled with A. J. M. Smith, the Canadian poet, as well as with F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce and Ezra Pound, the last of whom had already initiated "The Exile," the avant-garde publication of the expatriates. His publications in the foreign lands attracted the attention of the editor of Scribner's Magazine who published two of his short stories. In 1930 he published It's Never Over[3] and in 1932, A Broken Journey.[4]

---

[1]Macmillan, Toronto, 1928, 264p..

[2]Scribner, Macmillan, Toronto, 1930, 371p.

[3]Scribner, Macmillan, Toronto, 1930, 235p.

[4]Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932, 270p.

Inevitably the broadening experience of his travels profoundly influenced Callaghan's attitude toward life. His next novel, Such Is My Beloved, published in 1934, Callaghan's best novel, is a study of spirituality in the Christian life. The novel however provoked the indignation of many conventional Catholics most of whom rejected the novel on the grounds that it was a gross misrepresentation of Catholic life. Adverse criticism reached its peak when The Catholic World wrote that "neither as a contribution to the study of the various problems suggested, nor as a literary creation, does the book possess any value."[1]

However, not all critics censured the novel. Henry Seidel Canby, for example, viewed it as a fine work of art:

> Such Is My Beloved attempts to be human rather than scientific, and if it is good sociology, it is better art. It is 'The Song of Solomon' worked out in terms of a sordid industrial town, where a simple but not naive soul encounters once again the complexity of love which cannot be divine without being human and cannot be human without involving the inconsistencies and inconveniences of experience.[2]

Nevertheless, much of the criticism of the Thirties and Forties continued to be unfavorable. Callaghan, however, persevered in his creative work. In 1951, when The Loved

---

[1]Vol. 139, April, 1934, p. 122.

[2]Saturday Review of Literature, Vol. 10, March 19, 1934, p. 535.

and the Lost[1] was published, Edmund Wilson acclaimed it as "one of the high points of contemporary American literature (which) ought to be read wherever the English language is spoken."[2] Erskine Caldwell lauded it as "perhaps (Callaghan's) finest achievement."[3]

The continued popularity of the short stories was indicated by the publication of Morley Callaghan's Stories in 1959. The author's literary stature was even more firmly established with the publication of The Many Collored Coat[4] and A Passion in Rome[5] in 1960 and 1961, respectively.

Because many of Callaghan's works deal with religious themes, Robert Weaver once asked whether the author desired to be considered "a religious novelist."[6] Replying that he "did not mind being called a religious

---

[1]Macmillan, Toronto, 1951, 234p.

[2]As quoted by Barbara Moon in "The Second Coming of Morley Callaghan," MacLean's, Vol. 73, December 3, 1960, p. 19.

[3]p. 19.

[4]Macmillan, Toronto, 319p.

[5]Macmillan, Toronto, 352p.

[6]Robert Weaver, "A Talk with Morley Callaghan," p. 25.

novelist," Callaghan nevertheless added:

> The last thing that's in my mind is to write religious books. If that's the way they turn out, that's the way they turn out. You have to have some kind of a view of life. My view of life was not Fitzgerald's view of life or Erskine Caldwell's view of life, and certainly anybody capable of passing an entrance exam ought to have seen years ago that it's not Hemingway's view of life.[1]

Unquestionably, Callaghan's novels and short stories reflect his own uncompromising view of life, by implication a religious one. Unlike Waugh and Greene, who were converts, Callaghan was born in the Faith and grew up in a throughly Catholic environment. Inevitably, things Catholic aroused within him a special interest. His sense of justice led him to expose the sham and hypocrisy of some members of the Church; his enormous compassion prompted him to explore the sources of the misunderstandings which ravaged many of his fellow Catholics.

This study, therefore, will attempt to examine the "religious" writings of Morley Callaghan, especially as the religious quality affects the author's portrayal and characterization of the Catholic clergy living within the turmoil of the twentieth century world. The study will endeavor to examine more particularly the element of compassion which underlies nearly all of these writings.

---

[1]Robert Weaver, "A Talk with Morley Callaghan," p.25.

This study further aims to demonstrate that 1) although Morley Callaghan disclaimed writing "religious" novels as such, several "turned out that way"; 2) the "religious" novels contain serious discussions of the life and responsibilities of the clergy; and 3) the "religious" novels mirror the author's concept of the priestly vocation, as well as his sympathetic understanding of the difficulties besetting the priest in contemporary America.

As a basis for the exploration of the above concepts, pertinent short stories will be examined together with the following novels: It's Never Over, A Strange Fugitive, A Broken Journey, Such Is My Beloved, and The Many Colored Coat.

CHAPTER II

SPIRITUALITY AND THE PRIESTHOOD

Chekhov is quoted as saying,

> Look at this life of ours: the powerful are arrogant and idle, the weak are ignorant and live like cattle. ...And yet not a sound is to be heard in all the houses and all the streets; ... And it would seem that such an order of things is necessary. ... A man with a hammer ought to stand behind the door of every satisfied man and by knocking on it remind him constantly that there are people who are unhappy and that, however happy he may be now, sooner or later he, too, will feel life's sharp claws and that when misfortune overtakes him -- illness, poverty, bereavements -- no one will see or hear him, as he does not see or hear other.[1]

The man with a hammer in his hand knocking at the conscience of mankind -- that Callaghan has conceived this eminent destiny of the creative writer as his share to the betterment of his fellowmen is evidenced from his works. As a Catholic writer, Callaghan strongly feels that the spirituality of the Church depends on the inner life of its leaders. This is the reason why the relationship of the spiritual life to the priesthood constitutes one of the absorbing problems of his novels. On the one hand, he portrays the fervent priest who nurtures within himself the life of the spirit, radiating the light of grace and

---

[1]David Magarshack, Chekhov, A Life by, New York, Grove Press, 1953, p. 326-7.

thus unconsciously influencing those with whom he comes in contact. On the other hand, with an objective frankness he exposes the appalling complacency of the self-satisfied cleric totally unaware of the shallowness of his supernatural life. In this chapter we will show how Callaghan attaches the utmost importance to the inner spirituality of the individual priest and its consequent effects upon his ministry.

An incident in A Strange Fugitive[1] illustrates the import of Callaghan's conviction. Vera Trotter, Harry Trotter's wife -- a young non-Catholic woman -- suddenly professes a desire to become a Catholic, a move inspired simply by an account of one priest's fidelity to the interior life and his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Relating the story to her husband, Vera says, "I met one of the girls today, and she told me the most wonderful story about a priest."[2] Callaghan continues:

> Vera told the story carefully. This priest was a plump man of fifty-six with snow-white hair. In his house were two younger priests, and an old housekeeper. This priest was a jolly man who loved life and at the same time was extremely religious. "He didn't get excited about religion," Vera said. "There

---

[1]New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928, 264p.

[2]p. 28.

was just something about him. It was his way. You got to know that he was religious."[1]

Understandably, Harry cannot comprehend this type of life and attempts to make a joke of it. But Vera persists:

"No, this is serious. He was the sort of man you'd expect to make the perfect father. Or a wonderful husband."
"Well, what was preventing him?"
"Nothing was preventing him. Only something else was holding him and taking up all that part of him, see."[2]

And Vera continues:

"I guess he had other things to think about. He knew when he was well off."
"He couldn't have looked at it in that way. I mean when you think of getting and being married, you can't help thinking of marriage nights and so on, isn't that right?" ... "Well listen to this. The old priest's housekeeper found out something. About two o'clock one night she heard someone moving around the house, and standing on the stairs she could see this priest, and he had a coat wrapped around him and his slippers on and he was going downstairs. It was a warm summer evening."[3]

His curiosity aroused, Harry asks, "She followed him, eh?"[4]

To which Vera replies:

"Yes, she followed him out the door and across the lawn to the church. He went up to the altar and knelt down and prayed. 'Hail Mary,' like that. All alone in the big church at two o'clock in the morning."[5]

---

[1] p. 28.

[2] p. 28.

[3] p. 28.

[4] p. 28.

[5] p. 28.

Now thoroughly interested, Harry questions: "What got into him? Something worrying him?"[1]

> "Not really. The housekeeper found out that he did it three times a week. It never bothered him during the daytime. See how it works out?"[2]

Although Vera has recounted her story with the simplicity of a child, Harry does not possess the faith which would enable him to understand the priest's attitude towards the Blessed Sacrament as the Source of Divine Life. "What are you getting at, Vera?"[3] he demands.

> "It was like keeping a date. Don't you see?" she said, excited a little. "There in the Cathedral at night he kept a date. It all took the place of something and I just bet that was the reason why he seemed such a happy contented priest. Somehow or other the idea of the thing makes me feel like becoming a Catholic."[4]

In this brief story Callaghan portrays, in the character that he affectionately titles the Old Priest (he never has another proper name), his first priest as a man inspired by a living, supernatural faith. The Old Priest possesses what to Vera seems an indefinable something, but what is really a sign of a genuine devotion

---

[1] p. 28.

[2] p. 49-50.

[3] p. 50.

[4] p. 50.

that feeds a true spiritual life. Of course, a true spiritual life fulfills in its slightest details the great commandment of love. Even if we know nothing of the pastor's relationships with his fellow-men, his love for God is an inspiring light on the path that leads to perfection. We read in the Gospels that Christ Himself spent many a night in adoration and prayer, for in these intimate conversations with God he had the source of vitality needed to achieve His divine mission. The Old Priest, in his own way, proves that he nurtures a similar love for God. Vera underlines its irresistible force when she draws a parallel between a priest and a bridegroom. As she puts it, "When you think of getting married and being married, you can't help thinking of marriage nights and so on." The bridegroom longing for his bride symbolizes the priest's longing for God. A husband proves his love for his wife when he keeps his "date" with her. Thus it is with the priest; he too must keep his "date" with the Beloved. With this reasoning, Vera chances upon the secret of the Old Priest's happiness. As for the priest himself, his fidelity to the exigencies of his vocation brings him closer to the Source of holiness.

The portrait of the Old Priest emphasizes the beauty and grandeur of the priesthood as embodied in the priest who lives a solid spiritual life. It must be

remembered that the Old Priest is Callaghan's first attempt to come to grips with the character of the priest. Callaghan shows through the Old Priest that he understands the true nature and beauty of the sacrament of Holy Orders: a sacrament of faith that calls for an intense inner life. Of course, by virtue of his vocation, the priest is the representative of God on earth and the distributor of God's life among men.

But such an exalted station presupposes, or at least requires, that the priest, as agent, himself be in full possession of that which he distributes: the divine life. And it is this divine life within the Old Priest to which Vera responds so ardently. Because he was faithful in keeping his "dates" before the Blessed Sacrament, Vera saw him as a holy man. His own love was transformed in the presence of the Divine Love which in turn permeated his whole life. Like a lodestone, his strong faith drew others closer to God. And this is the role of the priest; it is essentially a divine one. If he desires to be a living source of divinity on earth, he must divinize himself; he must keep himself in constant communion with the Divinity itself. If even for a moment he ceases to feed his spirituality with the divine life, he becomes a man of the world, living in the world, and for the world. He ceases to be what he represents.

In Vera's testimony concerning the Old Priest's life, Callaghan seems to point out the essence of the spiritual life. Obviously Callaghan does not paint the spiritual life as an easy one; because it is the life of God lived by human beings; spirituality is as complicated as life itself. Nevertheless, the portrait of the Old Priest raises a question. The pastor appears to live his spiritual life with "very little effort,"[1] sustained only by his nocturnal rendez-vous in the parish church. Does this give Vera -- and the reader -- sufficient evidence to conclude that he is therefore a happy, holy and contented priest? A parallel with a comparable situation from the everyday world will help to answer the question. Some people, for example, seem to live their entire lives with such exterior ease that we tend to look upon this apparent easy life with an envious eye. Others, again, must struggle even when confronted with only normal difficulties. Ultimately, success or failure depends upon the manner in which the difficulties are tackled. The right approach not only helps to overcome obstacles, but it also ennobles the individual; conversely, the wrong attitude

---

[1]"In His Own Country" in A Native Argosy, Toronto, Macmillan, 1929, p. 300.

renders the sufferer helpless, and perhaps demeans him as well. Does the same problem exist when one has to face the difficulties of the spiritual life? This is the question Callaghan has tried to illustrate in "In His Own Country." Let us glance at this story where we have a different view of the Catholic priest as seen by another non-Catholic.

Bill Lawson, an Anglican, is married. He works on a small newspaper where "there's an awful lot of bunk tossed around, lies and suggestions, so a man can no longer be scrupulous."[1] Such a statement shows Bill's pre-occupation the problem of adjusting his life with his creed. His daily work on the paper has had a harmful effect on his life as a Christian. It has gone to such an extent that now "a man can no longer be scrupulous." Bill has come to a point where he must solve the problem of his life: should he surrender to the forces of evil? He refuses to yield to the insistances of his superiors for it gives him troubles of conscience. He wants to live a peaceful life. On different occasions, he has visited a Catholic Church searching a helpful hand which could lead him to the path of happiness. In his attempt to eschew spiritual degradation, he has seen Father

---

[1] p. 303.

Stacey, who told him "that he could lead a normal blameless life with a little effort and a careful examination of his conscience."[1] This has pleased Bill, and he has resolved to build his Christian life on "a careful examination of his conscience." The logical consequences are immediately felt, for Bill comes home one day to tell his wife, Flora, that he has quit his job. "I felt I ought to do it and I did it."[2] Of course he has become so obsessed by the problem of examining carefully his conscience that anything he had to do, he felt obliged to weigh on the scale of his conscience to determine whether it was right or wrong. He admits, "Maybe I've got so I'm too scrupulous"[3]; nevertheless he is severely hampered by the problem. "I can't go on working and worryin' over whether everything I'm doing's right or wrong."[4] So he takes the next logical step: if he does nothing, he will have nothing to worry about.

What Father Stacey has told Bill is impressive at first sight and seems to be a wise statement promoting the core of a solid spirituality. However, the statement

---

[1] p. 300.

[2] p. 302.

[3] p. 302.

[4] p. 303.

led Bill into a horrible disaster. He comes to a point where he abandons his wife and even his own parents. Because of this catastrophe, we ought to scrutinize Father Stacey's standard of spirituality to find out why this principle has lured Bill onto such a disastrous path.

Father Stacey, in promoting conscience as the unique pillar of spirituality, maintains that the spiritual life consists in computing gains and losses. But conscience, though necessary, is only a rule of morality which measures human actions as agreeable or not to the divine will. But is spirituality only a question of keeping a ledger of profits and losses? Or, for that matter, is it one of leading a blameless life? Can life be reduced to such a simple expression that "with a little effort" it is possible to solve all its difficulties? The proper solutions to these questions will help to determine the role of conscience in one's spirituality.

In giving to conscience the leadership of his spiritual life, Bill Lawson has committed the horrible mistake of grafting his spirituality on the lifeless tree of law. For conscience is a judgment of practical reason concerning the morality of a particular act. In judging a particular act, the practical intellect draws its conclusions from the knowledge man has of the natural law and the eternal law. According to its very nature, then,

conscience can never espouse standards or principles which do not originate from the law, be the law human or divine. Thus, by its nature, a law has nothing to offer but a measure which the practical intellect uses to establish the morality of any particular human act. As the only source of energy required to perform such an act, conscience has only the law to offer. In portraying Bill Lawson, Callaghan certainly had in mind how so many well intentioned people can commit monstrous atrocities when guided only by conscience. In their day-by-day life, they constantly measure people instead of loving their neighbour; they help law prevail over charity. Conscience can never dictate an act of love, for love is charity and charity is above the law. While the Eternal Law was condemning St. Peter as a public sinner for his public denial of Christ, Divine Love looked at him as he was and loved him in his deeply human misery. Christ could have ostracized Peter and remained perfectly at peace with his conscience, for he would have satisfied the law. However, the Church would never have got such a wonderfully humble man as Peter for its first leader. Where conscience was not given to condemn so harshly, charity was given a chance to mould a great pope for the Church and win another saint in heaven.

Father Stacey's second <u>faux pas</u> is to have ignored God's commandment of love as the core of a genuine spirit-

tuality. As a religious leader, his duty is to instruct people on how to work their own salvation. In any event, when Bill went to Father Stacey for advice that would help him reach perfection, he had taken the right step. And here Bill Lawson is a typical figure of the young man in the Gospel who went to meet the Master to find out what was required to become a saint: "Good Master, what shall I do to gain eternal life?"[1] Christ answered that he was to observe the commandments. Somewhat like Bill Lawson who thought it was not enough to be like everybody else, the young man of the Gospel is not satisfied with a mere observance of the rules. He said, "Master, all these I have kept ever since I was a child."[2] He wanted more, and in this "more" lies our sanctification, for "Jesus, looking at him, loved him."[3] and gave him the core of our Christian life: "Come, follow me."[4] Bill could have lived a quiet life by going along with the others. However, he wanted more. Unfortunately he is not told that he must take a positive attitude toward his spiritual life, that he must follow the Master. This is where Father Stacey caused Bill's ruin.

---

[1] Mc. X, 17.

[2] 20.

[3] 21.

[4] 21.

While in "In His Own Country" conscience turns everything to turmoil and ruins so many lives, in the life of the Old Priest as portrayed in A Strange Fugitive, charity has moulded everything in a divine peacefulness. In this novel Callaghan has chosen to portray his first priest as a man with an intense spirituality, leading a peaceful and happy life. Vera Trotter relates his peaceful life to the fact that he keeps "his dates" with the Blessed Sacrament. He is so permeated with God's love that Vera expresses his radiating joy when she says, "I just bet that was the reason why he seemed such a happy contented priest."[1] Thus his love for God has brought him to the source of his happiness. Nothing is said about his difficulties, for the whole emphasis is on how he lives his spiritual life in keeping his "dates" with the Blessed Sacrament. He has to meet the trials and difficulties of life like anybody else, for they are inevitable. But the real tactic consists in giving oneself the best preparation required to face them. And this preparation is not primarily a question of conscience or morality, but a question of love.

Bill Lawson's experience is for Callaghan a wonderful opportunity to illustrate the ordinary man's

---

[1] p. 50.

thirst for happiness and the necessity of a genuine knowledge capable of leading him to true happiness. He shows us in the Old Priest how total adherence to love as the promoting source of inner life achieves man's happiness. On the other hand, this true happiness is obtained only at the price of a genuine love which is the measure of one's spirituality. While Bill Lawson does not spare any means to build his spiritual life, the more he looks for happiness the further he gets away from it. Before he met Father Stacey, he lived with his wife and could earn his living. Now he has become a stranger to everybody. His wife has deserted him and he himself has become a speechless human wreck, living in a completely strange world. In his endeavours to live a "blameless life with a little effort," he only gains all the blame for having destroyed his home and ruined his life. Numberless difficulties rose up on his way only to crush him, for he was unable to cope with them. The Old Priest is as strong in them as the source that feeds him, for he has developed an unfeigned love for God. When a life is built on charity, writes St. Paul, neither trials nor tribulations can separate it from God. Bill's mistake was to build his spirituality on the strict observance of moral standards. He has nothing to feed his strength which would render him virtuous in action. He was told to measure his actions carefully, but he was never told

he had to produce them before he could measure them. And we find him day after day sitting in a rocking chair, waiting for his own disintegration.

In the two cases just examined, Callagham explores the spiritual life in its core as well as in its fruits. He shows that spiritual success comes to those who bring an active cooperation with God's love to bear on their own sanctification. There are not two ways of being good Christians: the Christian life must be built on the love of God or else it is doomed to complete failure. A soul which feeds its inner life only on a purely moral code reduces spirituality to a pharisaical observance of morality. Callaghan sees in Father Stacey the terrible stress upon morality which is always sapping the spirituality of the Church. Bill Lawson is an example of the spiritual disaster of such a false spirituality. God is the immediate source of spirituality, and outside God's love there is no spiritual life. In his next novel Callaghan furthers his study in another attempt to disclose the horrible consequences awaiting the priest whose spirituality has been reduced to nothing. Here, however, the author looks at the priest as seen from within the Church, and he depicts the consequences of spiritual inanition in the lives of the faithful.

In <u>It's Never Over</u>, Father Mason is in charge of a jail located within the limits of his parish. Whenever

a prisoner is sentenced to hang, Father Mason is called to prepare the convict to die. He has already accompanied three men to the gallows. Now he is preparing his fourth one. Fred Thompson, a parishioner and a good friend of Father Mason, has been sentenced to death for murdering a policeman. The sentence is to be carried out tomorrow. The priest has visited Fred very often during the last two days, most probably for the purpose of bringing him the help of the sacraments and the consolations of the Church. In order to keep himself going, Father Mason "had had a drink of whiskey and it was strong on his breath."[1] This confession, which apparently seems to underline only a casual and harmless incident, ought to be scrutinized in the light of the priest's life.

On the eve of the execution the priest meets John Hughes, who has not been in church for ten years, but who has always been a good friend of the Thompsons. In his conversation with John, Father Mason reveals himself: his inner thoughts, the source of his behavior as well as his indifference in matters of faith. First of all he begins to realize that he has not treated all the convicts with the same depth of feeling when he says to John:

> You know I've walked to the gallows with three men, but Fred will be the first one that I actually know. That makes a difference.[2]

---

[1] p. 8.

[2] p. 7.

While both are talking about Fred's funeral, John is suddenly stupefied by the cold attitude they both hold on such a mournful subject: "Lord, the funeral. Fred over there at that window and we're talking about burying him in two days."[1] John is explicitly concerned with the indifference of their chat on such a dreadful subject. However, death has tamed Father Mason, who very calmly answers, "He's ready. I walked up here an hour ago."[2] John has an idea that one can never be ready to die. In his reply to the priest, "So Fred's ready to die,"[3] John expresses incredulity. Father Mason continues "He's looking forward to it."[4] This preparation for death reminds us of the enthusiasm that permeated the early Christians seeking martyrdom under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Fred, however, does not seem to be under the same guidance. Father Mason tells John: "I try to get them feeling that way. It almost hypnotizes them. He's perfectly reconciled to everything. He's ready to leave the world."[5]

---

[1] p. 12.

[2] p. 8.

[3] p. 8.

[4] p. 8.

[5] p. 8-9.

Father Mason's success with his victims resides in his ability to hypnotize them. He shows them death as inevitable. Death dwells among men. He has seen death so often that he is "used to it," and he tries to get the others "feeling that way."[1] In his dreadful aberration of the supernatural, the priest has even lost the sense of life and death. His pragmatism has devaluated the dignity of the human person. Even if he has seen many people die, he has forgotten that each human being dies only once, that death means to each one the greatest and the final sacrifice of his own life.

Father Mason is aware of the fact that death requires a certain abnegation. Therefore, to serve his purpose, he prepares his convicts in two steps. In the case of Fred Thompson, the first step makes him "perfectly reconciled to everything."[2] The second prepares him to die "a perfect death."[3] The perfect reconciliation to "everything" signifies only every worldly thing, for the name of God is never once quoted by Father Mason. Thus Fred's preparation is a pagan one, for it has been only human and superficial. His reconciliation to everything

---

[1] p. 9.

[2] p. 9.

[3] p. 9.

is almost the death of a Stoic. The convict is asked to face death boldly, rather than with the fear of the Lord which gives to the soul a filial love for God. For Fred death does not have its repercussion in eternity since life has lost its Christian meaning. While the first step is entirely a pagan one, the second one tends to disparage the priceless values of the human person by reducing death to a childish event. This is what Father Mason expresses when he tells John:

> Good Lord, He'll die a perfect death. He's absolutely resigned about it. That's the main thing. That's what I have to do. . . . He wasn't a very good Catholic, not like his sister Isabelle or his mother, but you know he's simple about it now as a child.[1]

Assuredly, if Father Mason can reduce Fred to the simplicity of a child when facing death, he has diminished the need for any spiritual assistance. However, the priest has forgotten that Fred had not the innocence of a child to enable him to face death as a child. And John Hughes sounds the right note when he retorts that "it sounds bad thinking of him wanting to die."[2] The priest admits that

> None of them want to die. The bad part will come when he sees the noose. He'll start and straighten up and I can almost see him doing it. Then he'll go on and die a perfect death."[3]

---

[1] p. 8.

[2] p. 9.

[3] p. 9.

It is clear that Father Mason trains his victims to save the apparent reality by repudiating the inner sentiments. He wants them to lie to themselves as he does to everybody and even to himself. If he succeeded with Fred and perhaps with others, it appears that he did not with Isabelle Thompson.

As a parish priest, Father Mason must prepare not only convicts to be hanged, but also parishioners to accept God's will in death. Isabelle Thompson, Fred's sister, has been faithful to her spiritual life to the best of her ability. Of course her life is not a spotless one, for she is a human being. However, Father Mason approves of her life and wishes that Fred would have been as good a Catholic as his sister. During her sickness, she sought the priest's help. But Father Mason could not understand her sense of apprehension and proved to be practically of no help to her. After the hanging of her brother, she had to quit her work in the office because:

> "I knew I could never go back and have the people staring at me. Where else could I go where the same thing wouldn't happen? I suppose I ought to get married."[1]

In her unsuccessful efforts to marry John Hughes, one evening she had gone to meet him in his room and there

---

[1]p. 44-5.

they committed fornication. For her, it had become the sin of her life. She had gone to confession to Father Mason and explained to him her real concern for that sin. The confessor, who had lost the sense of sin, could not understand her concern. Isabelle received absolution, but it seems that her sense of eternity kept Father Mason away from her, for she dies without his assistance.

In the death of Isabelle, Father Mason shows once more his lack of spirituality. Once he hears about her death, he is not preoccupied at all with her everlasting life; rather he is anxious to know if she accepted death quietly, like a child. He finds that death was the best issue for her human misery, and this is why he

> was almost too cheerful, because he was used to the notion of death, and said to John: "It's the best thing for her. What's there to worry about now? She died quite peacefully, didn't she?"[1]

Isabelle, sick and still unmarried, had become useless in this world. So it was best for her to die. Like a wise mechanic who scraps a useless car, Father Mason easily scraps people whom he judges useless. Although he has provided Fred with merely human assistance, Isabelle died with no assistance whatsoever.

In his sacred ministry, Father Mason does not appeal to any supernatural help. He has no compassion

---

[1]p. 222.

for the three convicts and bears only human sentiments for Fred Thompson. This lack of compassion is unmistakably a sign of lack of spirituality. He cannot appreciate the priceless value of each soul, because he has no means of seeing it in the perspective of the new economy of salvation. Having no spiritual life, he had never reached the only source able to give him the real value of the human soul rooted in eternity.

In his endeavours to assist his parishioners, Father Mason shows himself a minister of a religion that has no sacraments and apparently no personal God. Father Mason says never a good word regarding the necessity of the sacraments in our life. He has nothing against them -- he simply ignores them. The sacraments are the main source of divine life on earth; how could a priest ignore them? Father Mason is living a spiritual aberration where life has been reduced to its ultimate simplicity and eternity to oblivion. The priest has suffered this aberration because man is essentially one and suffers no split in his identity. When one does not live according to his creed, he comes to believe according to his practice.

Now that we have seen the spirit in which Father Mason carries on his priestly duties, it is appropriate to examine another aspect of the character of the priest in relation to the God whom he serves. Since we can

always learn something about the nature of a tributary from the source that feeds it, let us examine the source from which Father Mason draws the strength to fulfil his ecclesiastical functions. As he talks with John, he wonders whether his passion for liquor won't betray him. "Tell me John, can you smell whiskey on my breath?"[1] John, himself a good pagan and a man of the world, is not going to tell the truth; he admits he has caught "a little, not much"[2] of the whiskey smell on Father Mason's breath. But Father Mason knows how much he has leaned on it, and he decides to walk home. "I oughtn't to take it, but I've got to keep going."[3] He knows he takes "too much of it, that's the trouble"[4] with him.

Liquor has become Father Mason's strength. "I oughtn't to take it, but I've got to keep going." The sublimity of his sacred functions require a better source, a source which is not of this world; for no one can serve two masters. But he is unable to entrench himself in the Divine Love. Moreover, he does not even think of it. He

---

[1] <u>It's Never Over</u>, p. 11.

[2] p. 11.

[3] p. 11.

[4] p. 11.

goes as far as having a negative attitude towards whiskey, but what can he do? His priestly duties cannot be fulfilled except on the merely human level, for he is unable to fulfil them supernaturally as a priest. And he has "to keep going." People continually call on him in their dealings with their problems involving eternity. So he has accepted the fact that he will be a priest according to Bacchus if not according to Christ.

Thus he has no spirituality. He still holds onto a certain faith: his attitude towards eternity is a pagan one. He believes in the immortality of the soul and the existence of evil. But his faith is not strong enough to move the mountain that cuts him from the sight of God in the full light of charity. He retains enough knowledge of eternal life to play his game as the religious leader of his congregation, for the faithful still accept him as their priest. But he does not have enough faith to bring God to them and them to God. The faithful must suffer all the evils that strike them because of this deficiency.

Father Mason appeals to alcohol to help him over his crisis. On the eve of Fred Thompson's execution, the priest has overindulged once again. He tells John Hughes, "I oughtn't to take it, but I've got to keep going. I take too much of it, that's the trouble."[1] He knows he

---

[1]p. 11.

ought to stop: "I mean I oughtn't to take any more tonight because of tomorrow. It bothers me taking it to help over a crisis."[1] Liquor has become for him a drug he needs, because it helps him go over a crisis. He is aware of this pitiful condition. It bothers him to think he needs liquor to keep going. However, he is down to a point where he seems unable to help himself. He needs more strength, for his duties require more than a human being ordinarily can give. Lacking a genuine strength, he tries to find in whiskey an artificial one.

The hanging of Fred Thompson has continued to haunt the priest's mind. Being unable to see him through the eyes of faith in the splendor of eternity, he pictures him in his own mind as he has seen him struggling with death. This has a devastating effect on him. On Christmas evening he comes down to the crowded hotel dining-room for his Christmas dinner. "His breath smelt of liquor and he was feeling very jolly."[2] He meets John there and tells him how he has "been trying for a long time to forget Fred,"[3] but has been unsuccessful. Father

---

[1] p. 11.

[2] p. 142.

[3] p. 145.

Mason has no remorse about the way he has prepared Fred for death, but he feels that someone else should take over as prison chaplain. He sees his difficulties, but he is sure everybody is like him. As he says, "I don't ever want to walk to the scaffold with anybody, though I'll probably have to do it, because they'll have a hard time getting any one else."[1] His problem right now is "trying not to think. The drinks help a bit there."[2] After he has poured himself another drink, he adds, "I like the taste of whiskey," he said, "But I drink too much of it."[3]

The psychological reaction of Father Mason to liquor is that of a confirmed alcoholic. After each drink of whiskey, while he admits that he likes it, he is also positively sure that he ought to stop drinking. His mediocre faith is strong enough to prick his conscience with some remorse, but too weak to bring any amendment into his life. His passion for liquor gets its full satisfaction on that same Christmas night. After dinner John invites Father Mason to his room, because the priest thinks they should "have a little drink together in a

---

[1] p. 145.

[2] p. 145.

[3] p. 145.

place where it's quiet."[1] John gets a bottle of whiskey from a bootlegger and "they had several drinks."[2] As Father Mason "gets more hilarious,"[3] the problem of death comes up. He feels he is "ready to die at any time." "It will be easy for me and I don't expect it to bother me at all, just let me go to confession and get everything cleared up."[4] Far from looking at death as an unpredictable event, the priest has become presumptuous. He wants a chance to go to confession and then he will face death boldly. However, if he is assisted in the same way he assisted Isabelle Thompson and so many of his parishioners, he must not count on the sacrament of penance, because he will die without it.

The notion of death bothers Father Mason greatly, for each time a parishioner dies he is reminded that his turn will come one day. He is thinking of his preparation. Socrates is quoted as saying that life is a preparation for death. Father Mason feels he will be an exception to this rule; since he is not willing to change his life, he presumes upon a special favor. The fact,

---

[1] p. 143.

[2] p. 144.

[3] p. 144.

[4] p. 144.

however, that he may not be able to go to confession does not bother him. The possibilities of a sudden death or a complete loss of faith are hidden by his presumption. The question of acceptance or rejection in eternal bliss has raised no problem in his mind, for he is sure to make it.

Father Mason is presumptuous not only of his own salvation, but also of others'. John has not been in a church for ten years. The priest asks him a good question about his spiritual life, "What about you?"[1] He does not wait for an answer, but he immediately adds, "Oh, sure, you're all right. What am I talking about?"[2] And here again Father Mason sees no problem.

Isabelle Thompson is the only person for whom the priest has a real concern regarding this problem of salvation. Isabelle, of course, had committed fornication with John. In her confession she showed a real concern over that particular sin of fornication. She judged herself with severity since that sin was enough to deprive her of eternal happiness.

Heavily intoxicated, for he has "been drinking a great deal during the day,"[3] Father Mason explains to John how her sin is serious since Isabelle knows exactly

---

[1] p. 149.

[2] p. 149.

[3] p. 144.

where she stands. And because of her knowledge of sin he declares:

> It's rotten, because there's nothing left to her now. She knows how it is with her: I mean she knows all about the sense of proportion. Some girls never think of sin. Isabelle has thought all the time about the sin. There's the complete moral prostration... You know she'll go on trying to lose her immortal soul. I think she wants to. That's terrible, you know.[1]

Why does Father Mason consider so rotten the fact that Isabelle has a good sense of proportion and admits that her sin is a serious one? He calls her situation a complete moral prostration. If we remember Fred Thompson's case, though the priest admitted Fred had not been a good Catholic, he got Fred to face death as a child. For Father Mason, sin is not a tragedy in a man's life. It becomes a tragedy, however, only when somebody sees it as an obstacle to salvation. And for the priest, this attitude is a moral prostration. In order to avoid this degradation, one ought not to take sin seriously.

With Father Mason, we have seen how a priest completely destitute of any spirituality comes to lose the real meaning of life and its eternal consequences. He has no concern for any spiritual achievement for he does not see its necessity. In difficulties, he has turned to liquor instead of God. In order to escape the

---

[1] p. 146.

serious problems of salvation, he has reduced sin to an act of no consequence. In his next novel, Callaghan looks at a false spirituality from another point of view.

In A Broken Journey, Callaghan portrays Father Sullivan, the youngest priest at the cathedral. Here we have an example of naive immaturity, a glad dream of unreality. The touch of innocence that Callaghan gives Father Sullivan grows from the fact that the young priest has never come in contact with reality. The great challenge to his dream comes one evening when a priest is called to the bedside of Mrs. Gibbons. A prominent parishioner and "an unusually devout woman,"[1] she is admired by the priests at the cathedral. But this bubble is suddenly burst when she turns out to be in the words of her sister-in-law, "a sensual, materialistic woman without any morality, whose infidelity was a bit remarkable though ridiculous at her age."[2] Father Sullivan, with his own dream-bubble bursting around him, flees from the human reality that he should have known as a priest; the physician stands ineffectual and shocked in the presence of his first illness.

---

[1]Scribner, Macmillan, Toronto, 1930, 235p.

[2]p. 2.

Father Sullivan "had a sincere admiration for Mrs. Gibbons."[1] Since he is a young priest, he appreciates Mrs. Gibbons' spirituality as it appeared to him; for besides being a good supporter of the church financially, she "went regularly to Communion, always made a novena to the Little Flower, St. Teresa."[2] His eagerness to see a faithful soul seeking perfection was fully satisfied in this old lady. Many times

> in the summer evenings, when he was passing down the aisle from the vestry and it was almost dark in the Cathedral, he saw this good woman saying a few prayers before the altar of the Virgin. ... She was the kind of a woman, he thought, that all the priests of the parish ought to know more intimately.... It was satisfactory to think that such a well-groomed, dignified and competent woman should appreciate the necessity of strict religious practice in her daily life.[3]

His dream made him a priest satisfied with what he is. On that evening, by the bedside of Mrs. Gibbons, "he felt cool, dignified and important."[4] But when Mrs. Gibbons refused his help, "he felt with a kind of desperate clarity that really he had been always unimportant in the life around the Cathedral."[5] All his joy at being

---

[1] p. 135.

[2] p. 135.

[3] p. 135.

[4] p. 139.

[5] p. 145.

a priest is crushed by the first storm, because he was unprepared to meet reality. He did not realize that he was unprepared to meet reality. He did not realize that he was at Mrs. Gibbons' bedside not to feel important, but to look after a soul. Cast down from his dream in great disillusionment, on his way back to the rectory "he was still ashamed and had no joy at all now in being a young priest."[1]

Father Sullivan's spirituality appears immature because he is unable to adjust to Mrs. Gibbons. His faith in her spirituality is such that he has identified Christian perfection with the old lady's devotions. Marion, Mrs. Gibbons' daughter, had drifted away from the Church; Father Sullivan thinks it is "because of the influence of her irreligious father,"[2] for her mother seemssuch a spotless creature. When he hears that Mrs. Gibbons is "a terrible woman,"[3] he replies to Mrs. Gibbons' sister-in-law: "Are you sure that you're not mistaken about Mrs. Gibbons?"[4] This is not what he has seen with his own eyes in the cathedral so many times

---

[1]p. 145.

[2]p. 98.

[3]p. 137.

[4]p. 137.

since coming to the parish. The priests at the cathedral have often talked of her as "one of the finest women of the parish."[1] However

> There has been some rumors of a certain laxity in her life since her husband had either disappeared or deliberately gone away some time ago, but the pastor had shrugged his shoulders and spoken of scandal-mongers.[2]

The priests come to think that these "insinuations against the good name of Mrs. Gibbons... were in a measure an insinuation against the Church."[3] Father Sullivan had decided "that Mrs. Gibbons was really a splendid woman and a credit to any community,"[4] and therefore he is not prepared to believe any judgment against her. He wants to see her immediately. In the room he finds Mrs. Gibbons "depressed and unhappy as though she had been crying."[5] Father Sullivan had expected to see a sick, holy person who wanted perhaps to go to confession and to receive his blessing. Instead, he sees an old woman thoroughly inebriated. Then she begins with a question that shakes the priest, "Can't ask you to have a drink, Father?"[6]

---

[1] p. 138.

[2] p. 138.

[3] p. 138.

[4] p. 138.

[5] p. 139.

[6] p. 140.

In this first contact with reality, the young priest seems to be completely demoralized. His own spirituality has been put to the test. He can hardly realize that his first goddess had fallen off the altar to land quite deep in the mud. He notices "the wine bottle on the table"[1] and at the same time he hears the sister-in-law asking him to talk to her, because "something's bothering her conscience."[2] She would like Father Sullivan to tell Mrs. Gibbons "what a trollop she is."[3] But the afflicted priest has only a horrified reaction to this discovery of Mrs. Gibbons. He does not want to talk because he is afraid "to hear something that would disgrace her and the parish forever."[4] His idea of holiness seems to have been greatly damaged, "for he couldn't help thinking of Mrs. Gibbons as one of the finest women of the parish, and there she was stretched out like a loose old woman."[5] On her side, Mrs. Gibbons could not help "obviously thinking what a nice young fellow he was."[6]

---

[1] p. 140.

[2] p. 140.

[3] p. 140.

[4] p. 140.

[5] p. 141.

[6] p. 140.

Father Sullivan, because of the great admiration everybody has for him thinks a great deal of himself. Even though he is deeply concerned with Mrs. Gibbons' breach of morality, he is a priest, and therefore he has the powers to restore her to spiritual health. This is how the sister-in-law feels about Father Sullivan. She tells Mrs. Gibbons, "You wanted a priest."[1] She is quite sure the old lady will go to confession. She whispers to Father Sullivan, "Better plug your ears, Father."[2] But Mrs. Gibbons refuses to open her mind to Father Sullivan, for as she says to her sister-in-law, "Oh, he's too young. How do you expect me to talk to him?"[3] When the sister-in-law agrees that he is too young, Father Sullivan sees himself rejected, in spite of his eagerness to help, by one he had greatly admired.

As with most of Callaghan's priests, Father Sullivan's inability to overcome the first challenge to his spirituality seems to be rooted in his understanding of the spiritual life. He has a puerile attitude toward the complex problems of salvation and sanctification. As a young priest, he is portrayed with a great zeal to save

---

[1] p. 142.

[2] p. 142.

[3] p. 143.

souls. But it seems there is a lack of adjustment between his good will and reality. And from the way Callaghan presents the problem, it appears that the trouble lies in the training the priest has received in the seminary. His notion of spirituality seems to be rooted in a text book and confined to a strict observance of the moral code. The fact that it is impossible for him to believe that Mrs. Gibbons has sinned, is a proof that he has idealized the spiritual life. In her misery, she is not the lady of strong faith he saw in church, for she has broken the law.

The attitude Father Sullivan has toward life shows a great similarity to the ecclesiastical education he has received in the seminary. During his seminary training, he has studied the problem of sanctification in relation to the new economy of salvation, but he has learned it as a formalized code. He learned the sacraments were efficient channels of grace; and as a priest, he was to be the dispenser of God's grace among men. The Holy Mass instituted by Christ to feed the ever starving children of God has always been celebrated on white linens, symbol of purity. All the sacraments must be administered with clean vestments, because the sacraments deal with God Himself. Even his religious training has been given to him in a seminary where the world could not penetrate and where he would see nothing of the world. He had heard many times that sinners do exist and it is for them that

he was to be ordained a priest. But he had come in contact with these sinners only through books. He has known them as notions and not as real beings. From this background one can extract the main factors that have prevented Father Sullivan from building his own spirituality.

His poor concept of charity allowed him to become proud of being the youngest priest at the cathedral. He is still feeling the thrills of his ordination day. On this occasion people have proclaimed him the hero of the day because they knew through faith that it is a great honour to be called to the priesthood. But Father Sullivan looks at these compliments with self-satisfaction. He is "aware of his own particular dignity"[1] not as a priest, but as "the youngest priest."[2]

> Honestly, he would rather have been the youngest priest at the Cathedral at this time than be a bishop or a Cardinal.[3]

At this stage of Father Sullivan's career, Callaghan seems to portray the sense of futility that invades the young priest's mind in regard to his vocation. The priesthood for him is not seen as a sacrament that

---

[1] A Broken Journey, p. 136.

[2] p. 136.

[3] p. 136.

gives a man a share in the heavy burden of redemption. He looks at it from the outside and tries to fit the exterior exigencies of such a state of life. In "The Young Priest,"[1] we see the same Father Sullivan becoming "more solemn and serious" when he hears an old priest shouting "eloquently that a very young priest was greater and holier and more worthy of respect than anyone else on earth."[2]

This statement is an outspoken declaration of Father Sullivan's conception of the priesthood. Both the old and the young priests are focusing the essence of holiness, not on the priesthood, but on youth and the sentimentality of the occasion: qualities that do not relate to the spiritual life. A very young priest is greater, holier and more worthy of respect than anyone else on earth, according to the preacher. Normally holy means being permeated with the love of God; and the degrees in holiness will vary in proportion to the greater or the lesser love of God with which one is permeated. But in the ordination sermon, holiness bears a meaning other than that which Father Jimmerson thus explains. Father Sullivan complains about "older priests" being

---

[1]"The Young Priest" in Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959, pp. 180-186.

[2]p. 180.

"more mechanical about their duties." Father Jimmerson, "the oldest priest at the Cathedral" agrees with the young curate and adds, that

> it was the inevitable lot of them all, and that the most beautiful days of his life had been when he was young and had known the ecstasy of being hesitant, timid and full of zeal.[1]

While each priest tries to emphasize the essence of the spiritual life, there is a childishness in them that "teases us out of thought." Their approach to the spiritual life is vulgar, in the sense that their search for holiness is based on the sentimental returns one can experience in the priesthood. With such an attitude towards spirituality, this search for true holiness is doomed to failure. In all of them, spirituality is watered down to the point of sentimentality. Father Jimmerson states that the younger a priest is, the holier he will be. He explains that while still young he can be hesitant, timid and full of zeal. One might agree that a young priest experiences greater wonder and awe in celebrating the Mass. But from this, one may not conclude that he is holier. The fact that they all agree that sentimentality is a sign of holiness tells us that none of them has ever built his life on a true spirituality.

---

[1] A Broken Journey, p. 136.

The sort of eagerness that Father Jimmerson mentions is another element that shows his specific view of the spiritual life. This eagerness is a popular one, for the old priest in the ordination sermon has called upon it as a sign of holiness. Father Jimmerson has emphasized that "older priests," even if "just as determined to be good," "could not have the eagerness of the very young man."[1] However, eagerness in itself has no special value. It must be well founded and enduring. Like the parable of the seed planted in the shallow ground, it too often springs up eagerly and dies quickly, because it has no roots -- no depth. Without realizing what he is saying, the old priest is pointing to the shallowness of his concept of the holiness of the new priest. This is well borne out in the history of Father Sullivan's encounter with Mrs. Gibbons.

The glaring lack in the lives of these priests is the true notion that holiness means the love of God. It seems incredible that an old priest could say that he loves God less than when he was a young priest. The proof of the love of God is shown in the love of your neighbour; this love of neighbour does not seem to appear in Father Jimmerson's picture of holiness. Charity, the cornerstone

---

[1] p. 136.

of any genuine spirituality, is not mentioned once in his endeavour to penetrate to the core of a true spiritual life. Moreover, the many serious breaches of this divine virtue committed by these priests help us to understand the precarious nature of their concept of holiness. While Father Jimmerson wants to relive "the most beautiful days of his life....when he was a young priest,"[1] he shows he has never penetrated the priesthood as a sacrament of love. He has been interested in it because it was a wonderful way to express his feelings. This is why today he longs for the past since then "he was young and had known the ecstasy of being hesitant, timid and full of zeal."[2] He has been a "good" priest only during the time when his youth had propelled him into actions. He was then "full of zeal."

Father Jimmerson expresses a painful reality that perhaps many priests have experienced. As a young priest his zeal in God's service was propped on his sentimental appeal for ecclesiastical functions. Now that he is old, the sentimental motif has been replaced by a social one. As pastor of the cathedral parish, he is preoccupied only with "the really important people in the congregation

---

[1] p. 136.

[2] p. 136.

like Mrs. Gibbons."[1] He has put them on his reserved list, and sometimes he has "a Sunday dinner with them or a game of cards in the evenings."[2] His charity is not strong enough to enable him to love all his parishioners. He is limited only to those who have a social appeal for him. Definitely, he is now in the same mess as he had been with his feelings for the sacraments when he was a young priest. When Father Jimmerson longs for the past where he thinks he had a real spirituality, he proves he has been lacking a genuine spirituality all his life. Because he has lost his youth, he asserts that he has lost what is needed to be a good priest. In his case the priest is right of course, because he has based his sacred functions on his sentimental appeal for the ideal. Now that his sentimental appeal has left him, he is a priest with empty hands.

In truth, Father Sullivan is a picture of Father Jimmerson in his younger days. He likes to celebrate Mass with certain sentimental outbursts which he confuses with true ecstacies. He frowns upon the older priests for their apparent coldness in the fulfilment of their sacred functions. He abhors their mechanical actions and wishes they would relive the prime of their youth with all

---

[1] p. 135.

[2] p. 135.

its energy and devotion to beauty. Of course these impulses denote a very superficial mind, a mind that has not penetrated the nature of God's love for man. His superficiality hides his own false spirituality from himself. Perhaps his pride in his youth, in being the youngest priest, comes to an end only when Mrs. Gibbons refuses his assistance because he is too young. "He was still ashamed and had no joy at all now in being a young priest."[1]

The character of Mrs. Gibbons, however, reveals an attitude toward Christianity that calls for attention. She portrays the real type of faithful who struggle in the midst of human miseries to adjust their living in their faith. The fact that she is not understood by the priest at the cathedral does not mean that she is a hypocrite. In her love affair with her daughter's boyfriend, as well as in any other episodes of her life, she is a sincere woman whom life has broken in order to remould for a better life.

In Mrs. Gibbons, Callaghan has wanted to portray man in his full identity as pilgrim of eternity. Mrs. Gibbons is a controversial figure in the novel. While the priests at the cathedral praise her, for her sister-in-

---

[1] p. 145.

law she is "an old hussy beyond redemption."[1] Even her daughter Marion had wanted to become a nun, because "she wanted at the same time to be utterly apart and different from her, clean, simple and untouched by any of the passions she felt had destroyed her mother."[2] In reality, however, Mrs. Gibbons has two qualities her associates fail to recognize: she is a human being experiencing defeats because of her own limitations, and a woman with a strong faith. In the midst of her miseries she pleads guilty when she recognizes herself as such. Her frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament are an exteriorization of her need for God. It seems that, like St. Augustine, her sins help her to get closer to God. This is because she has accepted, consciously or not, her conditions as a human being still en route toward the eternal life. In her search for God, she is not presumptuous. Marion, at first, did not understand how her mother could be a sincere devout woman and at the same time a sinner. One evening she followed her mother. In church, she "saw her mother over to one side, up toward the front, close by the altar of the Blessed Virgin."[3] She is eager to discover which attitude her mother will assume in this

---

[1] p. 1.

[2] p. 22.

[3] p. 99.

contact with God. Callaghan describes the scene.

> She had expected to see her mother praying with some of the dignity of a prominent lady of the parish; instead she saw a heavy woman with bowed head, whose eyes were never raised, whose self-consciousness had been utterly destroyed in her prayer of humble adoration.[1]

Marion is really touched and she feels a greater compassion for her mother. She looks at her "telling her beads"[2] while she waits her turn sitting on the bench near the confessional. Callaghan shows the sincerity of Mrs. Gibbons when her turn comes. "Startled, she moved back to the pews as though she had decided at the last moment that she couldn't go to confession."[3]

Callaghan explores the character of Mrs. Gibbons to show the true nature of the pilgrim en route to heaven. Mrs. Gibbons is a sinner, for she is not confirmed in grace yet; only in heaven will she be impeccable. On the other hand, it is in the nature of the pilgrim to throw himself on God's mercy and to seek God's love in order to make the goal. In her sincere contrition, Mrs. Gibbons has lost herself in her love of God, agreeing to be

---

[1] p. 99.

[2] p. 99.

[3] p. 99.

"utterly destroyed"[1] in expiation for her sins. "In her prayer of humble adoration,"[2] there is enough hope to assure her of a final victory. She is the true picture of the fighter who must remain on the battlefield until the final victory has been completely achieved.

There is a spirituality in Mrs. Gibbons that is wanting in the priests of the cathedral. It seems that Callaghan, in portraying Mrs. Gibbons, wanted to emphasize the kind of genuine spirituality the priest ought to nourish if he wants to perform the work of God among men. Jesus has never rejected the repentent sinner. On the contrary, it is first of all for them that He came into this world. Father Sullivan rejects Mrs. Gibbons when he finds that she is a sinner. Instead of showing compassion for her misery, he disapproves of her with disgust. The lack of compassion for the sinner is always in the priest a true sign of a lack of spiritual life. To sympathize with those who do not need it is very human. But to become one with those who suffer is divine. The priest can measure the genuineness of his inner life if he can love those who are not particularly lovable. The great commandment of love requires that we love our neighbour as ourself. We love ourself as we are; therefore we

---

[1] p. 99.

[2] p. 99.

ought to love our neighbour as he is and not as we want him to be. Father Sullivan loved Mrs. Gibbons as long as he thought she was what he wanted her to be.

In A Broken Journey the reader penetrates the quiet life of a group of priests whose existences are moulded to fit the exigencies of a moral code. Charity, the core of any Christian life, is pushed aside, because law is preferred to love. When a life is built only on the observance of a moral code, the results are always lamentable. The priests whom Callaghan has portrayed are far from being pastors of souls. They are only disciplinarians, always ready to measure and to judge; and what is not according to the measure is rejected harshly. Charity, on the contrary, never judges, but is always ready to excuse and to help. It is in their priestly duties to love; however, they hate. Their example is baneful, for growing generations receive from their pastors their Christian or un-Christian attitude towards life as well as towards eternity. Bitterness and harshness are the true offspring of the law applied without love. A priest who loves contributes largely to the moulding of saintly lives, for charity alone bridges time with eternity.

CHAPTER III

THE PRIEST AS PHYSICIAN OF SOULS BELONGS WITH THE POOR AND THE WRETCHED

Callaghan has shown himself able to view the spirituality of the Catholic priesthood with a remarkably penetrating insight. In the novels already analyzed, we see how he attempts to create a literary reality which is more convincing than the reality of everyday life. By judicious selection of events, by careful use of dialogue appropriate to the clergy, and above all, by his intensification of dramatic incidents, Callaghan is able to produce this projection of his clergyman. While portraying his characters, he is able to give to his work of art a life apart from his own. As a true artist, he sits on Mount Olympus and observes--not without compassion, however--the ferment of life on earth. His eyes penetrate to the deepest motives of people, to the innermost recesses of their souls, to what they have hidden even from themselves. In his first novel, A Strange Fugitive, the Old Priest is striking evidence of the capacity the author shows for portraying the priest as he should be: a man with an intense inner life. Dealing with the spirituality of the priest, Callaghan has clung with

stubborn tenacity to the very core of the priesthood: this intimate and personal contact the priest must encourage in his relationship with God, the source of his spirituality. If the priest has not been transformed by the love of God to the extent that charity rules his life and motivates his action, he is unable to fulfill his sacred duties as a pastor of souls. In It's Never Over and A Broken Journey, the author portrays the consequences of a priestly life motivated otherwise than by charity.

One of the features which Callaghan finds most disturbing about priests is that they either lack spirituality or neglect the little they have. To gauge properly Callaghan's criticism, the reader needs some extra caution, for irony pervades the author's works with such a subtlety that much insight is required to detect the evil he exposes. In reading Bill Lawson's story, one feels at first that Father Stacey has given Bill the key to a good spiritual life when the priest says "he could lead a normal blameless life with little effort and a careful examination of his conscience." However, as one analyzes the story, one finds that this rule of spirituality is superficial, negative, and misleading. And Bill, in attempting to follow this rule-of-thumb spirituality, goes to his own destruction in "In His Own Country."

In It's Never Over, Father Mason, at first sight,

is a "good", jolly priest whom many would like to meet in actual life. But in reality he is a spiritual wreck living his priestly life with a wordly spirit. In his whole parish only one person worries him, Isabelle Thompson, Fred's sister. Father Mason was able to bring Fred to die a "perfect death" when Fred was sentenced to hang. But Isabelle cannot be resigned to such a death, for she sees herself unable to work out her salvation alone. She needs God's help. For Father Mason, this is the real sin, for she should face death "like a child." Isabelle is too concerned with her weakness; she thinks too much of her sin and she is not sufficiently stuffed with presumption. She refuses to die Father Mason's "perfect death" because death is too serious to be faced as a merely human end.

In A Broken Journey, Father Sullivan is portrayed as a priest who has not yet reached maturity. His conception of man reflects the delights of an adolescent. His aspirations for holiness were only flashes of endeavors depending upon the superficial enthusiasm of youth and a false concept of reality.

In both cases Callaghan portrays the spiritual miseries which perhaps surround many priests in actual life. A careful examination of his priests shows that most of the time misunderstanding of reality has led them away from a genuine spiritual life. If we analyze properly

the attitudes of Father Mason and Father Sullivan toward reality, we see that both have an inadequate understanding of human life. While Father Sullivan thinks of himself as already a member of the celestial hierarchy, Father Mason humanizes the supernatural. Thus they have no compassion for human weakness, because on either side they do not understand it.

Callaghan, in It's Never Over and A Broken Journey, portrays some of the difficulties awaiting the priest in his spiritual journey. As weak as other beings, he must live a holier life than the laity, or else his ministry will be ineffectual. In his attempt to live a holier life, however, it seems that often the priest has a tendency to separate himself from the rest of the faithful. In A Strange Fugitive, we feel that the Old Priest is too remote from the people to influence them in their life. Vera has great admiration for the priest's contemplative life. Though she considers the possibilities of becoming a Catholic, she seems to receive no help from the old pastor. Of course, Callaghan does not argue the point that faith is a gift of God, who gives it to whomever He pleases. As human beings, however, we know by experience that example is the best teacher one can have. Therefore, in the humano-divine context of our present state of life, would it be possible that the priest, while

remaining the ideal of Christian perfection, could involve himself in the real problems of actual life? This is the question Callaghan seems to study in his next novel. Thus we wish to peruse Such Is My Beloved to find out whether the priest can lead a spiritual life and at the same time immerse himself in social misery and the milieu of sin.

Father Dowling, a young curate at the cathedral, uses the pulpit to spread the doctrine of the Church on social behaviour. He is convinced of "the inevitable separation between Christianity and the bourgeois world."[1] His sermons, "rather disturbing for the older priest and some of the old and prosperous parishioners,"[2] spring from his love for the suffering. The pastor, Father Anglin, wonders "if the bishop could be advised to send him to some quiet town where he would not have to worry about so many controversial problems."[3] But he is cautious about this matter, for he is afraid "he would reveal too easily his own lack of faith in any social progress."[4] Therefore, "instead of arguing, he merely stared at him with his pale blue eyes and shrugges his shoulders as a kind of warning."[5] In spite of the

---

[1] Such Is My Beloved, p. 3.

[2] p. 4.

[3] p. 4.

[4] p. 4.

[5] p. 4.

pastor's opposition, however, Father Dowling continues to "shake his fist"[1] at the social abuses the poor people have to suffer because he wants the wealthy to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. But they refuse to provide any help. The whole conflict is set in motion for us when the young priest becomes involved in the spiritual and economic life of two prostitutes.

Late one winter evening, as he returns from a sick call, he is accosted by the two prostitutes. He has sized them up,[2] standing on the sidewalk, and is about to pass them "without ever looking at their faces"[3] when one of the girls calls, "Heh, where are you going? Wouldn't you like to stop a while?"[4] The young priest has never been accosted in such a way. His "head shot up in surprise."[5] His first reaction is puritanical. A priest ought not to talk with prostitutes. So "he ducked his head and began to walk more rapidly."[6] But before he has gone twenty paces, a conscious reaction overtakes him,

---

[1] p. 4-5.

[2] p. 4.

[3] p. 4.

[4] p. 4.

[5] p. 4.

[6] p. 4.

and "he began to be ashamed of his behavior."[1] He realizes he has behaved himself "as though hiding some guilty thought or longing within him."[2]

This reaction of shamefulness in Father Dowling for his un-Christian attitude towards the girls shows that he wants to live according to the Christian principles that inspire his sermons. He is a priest and he has despised two human beings in the same way a priest of the Old Testament once despised a wounded man on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho. He thinks he could have done something for them, "at least I might have shown a little pity for them."[3] He knows they did not recognize him as a priest, for "he did not look like a priest with the muffler wrapped around his neck."[4] But his charity is strong enough to arouse his compassion for these wretched ones. As he gets closer to them "he managed to smile a little,"[5] and even plans a few things to say to them. But the girls immediately bring him to a realization of their

---

[1] p. 4.

[2] p. 4-5.

[3] p. 5.

[4] p. 5.

[5] p. 5.

necessity. "Did you change your mind, Rosy Cheeks?"[1] He frowns upon this coarse approach and with a "very severe" look, he advises them in these terms: "It's a terrible night to see you standing there. You ought to be home in some decent place out of this."[2]

In the first meeting with the girls, Father Dowling shows his preoccupation with a desire to see them "in some decent place." Ironically, the two girls agree with the priest when tney answer "you're right about that."[3] While the prostitutes use plain words to convey their own feelings, they unconsciously give Father Dowling their answer: they will follow him back into the fold if his charity can lure them home. They do not expect to stand in the cold any longer, for they are sure of his willingness to join them in their vicious life. But Father Dowling sees in their answer their willingness to follow him to a "decent place" for their complete rehabilitation. And he already begins to dream of reclaiming them from the streets.

At the very beginning of the novel, Callaghan portrays society as it exists; it is not perfect because it is composed of imperfect human beings. He emphasizes the fact that if the social order presents opportunity for

---

[1] p. 5.

[2] p. 5.

[3] p. 5.

vice, foolish pride and cruel prejudice, nevertheless it alone can enable kindness, affection and generosity to flourish. The second group can mitigate the first. His novel has an order, a movement of events through time and space; within this order evolve the characters as the author sees them in actual life. Callaghan's concern is to study the motives that actuate the social forces which rule the individual as well as societies.

The plot of Such Is My Beloved is very simple. It has only two major motivations: social interest the priest shows for the welfare of his people, and the spirituality that feeds him in all his works. His spirituality is genuine, for it is based on a charity that excludes nobody. He had "hidden from two wretched-looking girls, who, no doubt, lived in his own parish not far away from the church,"[1] and for this he feels ashamed. The passage of time only deepens his charitable attitude toward the girls, and he finally puts it to his bishop in the words, "If I start hating prostitutes, where am I going to stop?"[2]

His interest in the welfare of needy people appears at the very beginning of his career, when he discovered

---

[1] p. 5.

[2] p. 132.

"that moral independence and economic security seemed very closely related."[1] People are not "detached from the life around them. They had free will only when they were free."[2] In his seminary training he had learned that

> St. Thomas Aquinas has said we have not free will when we are completely dominated by passion. Hunger was an appetite that had to be satisfied and if it was not satisfied it became a strong passion that swept aside all free will and rational judgment.[3]

He feels it is the work of the priest to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, for only charity can produce a better social economy. This is why "He refuses to solve the 'social problem' in social terms."[4] But to show a genuine spirituality, the young curate must practice what he preaches, and this he feels he has not done toward the two girls.

In his preliminary encounter with the girls, he seems to fail because he simply leaves the girls as he found them. He has compassion, but he does not know what to do; as he admits to himself, he "wanted to be persuasive and patient,"[5] "to speak with earnestness and

---

[1] p. 42.

[2] p. 23.

[3] p. 23.

[4] p. Preface, p.v.

[5] p. 5.

passion,"[1] but "their coaxing faces leering up at him made him feel confused,"[2] because "it was not clear to him what he ought to have done."[3] But when he returns to his room, he begins to see what he should have done. He realizes his narrow moral background induced a disgust in him for the girls because of the sinfulness they represented. And he feels it was this disgust which kept charity from producing its effects. Thinking that "he had had an opportunity to help them and had failed,"[4] he is deeply impressed by their misery, for "their rain-wet faces kept passing into his thoughts."[5] A true compassion moves him and he blames his hardness of heart for not having shown any sympathy for them. "If I had been different, if there had been more warmth and understanding in me, those girls would have felt it."[6] Hence he knows why he did not touch their heart: because he failed to prove his love for them. Good works alone will not touch the hearts of these girls; if he wants to help them, he must first love them.

---

[1] p. 6.

[2] p. 7.

[3] p. 7.

[4] p. 6.

[5] p. 6.

[6] p. 7.

In this first challenge, Father Dowling feels terribly alone. It seems that during the few moments he has been with the girls, he saw himself becoming one with them, for they appeared so much in need of him. Their moral and social miseries brought them very close to his heart. The lonesomeness that afflicts him is like that which a mother experiences after the death of a crippled child. The child has filled her life with his constant need of her care. Now that he is gone, she feels the emptiness in her life. Only love can link two lives together in such a strong union,

> My beloved is mine, and I am his.[1]

Father Dowling's longing for these two sould is the love song of "The Canticle of Canticles."[2] These two wretched souls are his love. Their miseries are his; "their rain-wet faces" have become his and he loves them because they are wretched souls. Christ did not come into this world only for the healthy, but also for the wretched. Thus Father Dowling sees his mission as a priest. These wretched souls have become his beloved to whom he sings,

> Behold, thou art fair, my love; thou art fair; Thine eyes are as doves.

---

[1]"The Song of Songs" quoted as in The Bible. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1936.

[2]Author's Note: "Song of Songs" is the same as the "Canticle of Canticles."

He sees them

> As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,
> So is my beloved among the sons.

He must go after them to tell them with the Shulamite:

> Rise up, my love, my fair one,
> and come away.

In a striking parallel, Callaghan has compared the love that a priest must bear for souls with the love Solomon portrays in his Canticle. The title of the book, taken from "The Canticle of Canticles," presupposes an object of love. There is a beloved somewhere, in some conditions of life. Where is this beloved, and in what condition is she? Father Dowling points out his beloved to us: two souls. In what condition are they? Two prostitutes, two cripples, who belong to the family of the children of God, but who are outcast because they are crippled. Father Dowling regards them with all the longing of Solomon:

> O my dove, thou art in the clefts
> of the rock,
> in the covert of the steep place,
> Let me see they countenance, let me
> hear thy voice.

The love which is expressed in "The Canticle of Canticles" is the true love that generates compassion for the beloved, lodging "in the clefts of the rock...of the steep place." The lover must take his beloved to "some decent place." This is Father Dowling's work and he wants to do it. He

feels "a peculiar exhilaration and joy in life and his work in the parish."[1] Callaghan portrays the priest's eagerness to help these two girls in these terms:

> All of his work since his ordination, as he thought of it, seemed groping and incomplete unless the way he had helped Midge and Ronnie was included, too.[2]

The fact that he has left the girls on the streets worries him. He is "full of sharp disappointment and more discouraged than he had been at any time since his ordination."[3] Pacing his room, he thinks: "Two girls in my own parish and in a hotel I could almost see from the window."[4] His compassion for them is such that he must go at once to see them. His beloved ones have taken over his whole mind and now he must go and search for them. He sees himself as the shepherd who is responsible for all the sould coming into his parish. "Why shouldn't I call on them as I would on any one else in the parish who might need me."[5]

Father Anglin has never experienced that sort of love for souls. "A bit settled in his habits and way of

---

[1] Such Is My Beloved, p. 17.

[2] p. 17.

[3] p. 6.

[4] p. 7.

[5] p. 7.

thinking,"[1] he treats his people as an impersonal administrator might do. The wealthy comes first, but there is no second or third. He has no consideration for Father Dowling's work in the parish. Ruled by a purely conventional moral code, he has lost the true sense of Christian charity. He sees Father Dowling's compassion for the poor with the eyes of an overseer who wants to keep his few wealthy people on good terms with his purse. "It made him sad to see how many of his own people had gone away, how small the collections were on Sunday."[2] Thus those sermons on "the building of a society on Christian principles"[3] are for him "explosions"[4] that can only destroy the finances of his parish. The poor are useless in a parish. Thinking of Father Dowling, he wishes the bishop would send "him away to some quiet town"[5] before he gets involved in too much trouble. On the evening of Father Dowling's first encounter with the prostitutes, the pastor presents the young curate with a cigar, using the ironical words, "It may explode in your mouth, but you like explosions, I believe."[6]

---

[1] p. 15.

[2] p. 37.

[3] p. 4.

[4] p. 6.

[5] p. 3.

[6] p. 6.

Though Father Dowling had always been very charitable in his relations with the old pastor, it was dangerous for him to tell his worries to the old priest. Thinking to himself, he has the intuition that the old pastor will condemn his compassion for the girls as a mere temptation. Though "a very pious old priest,"[1] Father Anglin is a Puritan in many ways. He does not believe in any "social progress."[2] but he shows himself a very stubborn reactionary. In weddings, he is opposed "to having rice thrown frivously at the door of the church," because "marriage was a sacrament and therefore a serious business."[3] He has decreed that "no marriage ceremony was performed later than eight o'clock in the morning,"[4] in order to give no opportunity for feasting and revelry. Facing the old pastor as he knows him, Father Dowling is right when he says, "I don't think he would like to hear me talking about those girls."[5] If he does it, it will be like calling a policeman[6] and "cause the girls' arrest."[7]

---

[1] p. 15.

[2] p. 3.

[3] p. 15-16.

[4] p. 16.

[5] p. 16.

[6] p. 7.

[7] p. 7.

In this inner fight, Father Dowling's background is challenged by a charity rooted in genuine spirituality. On the one hand, he is hampered by the chains of superficial standards which have become almost the core of his people's faith. His power to break through this code, however, is a proof of his unfeigned compassion for the wretched. His genuine charity enables him to reject a convention which obliges one to ostracize a prostitute. For it is in the name of religion that prostitutes are persecuted in his own society. Mr. Robison, a prominent Catholic lawyer, states flatly that "under no circumstances"[1] will he meet Ronnie and Midge in their room. The priest then urges that he meets the girls in his own home. This proposition upsets the lawyer. He is too much of a conventional Catholic to agree to interview two prostitutes in his home. "Good God, Father, have you lost your wits?"[2] The bishop also, in the name of religion, reproaches Father Dowling for his great mistake in his consideration for the prostitutes. He tells the priest he has gone to such an extreme "that they themselves were more important than the sinfulness they represented."[3]

---

[1] p. 87

[2] p. 88.

[3] p. 131.

He is unable to understand Father Dowling's love for these girls. As he says, "I should imagine the notion of prostitution alone would make you sick with disgust."[1] Father Dowling needs a strong and genuine inner life to fulfill what he considers his priestly obligation in spite of all this opposition.

In his pursuit of the lost sheep, the young curate is motivated only by charity. Because his mind is permeated with love, he keeps a hierarchy of values in his dealings with sins and sinners. What counts for him is the person, not the sins. While he disapproves of the sinfulness of Ronnie and Midge, he endures all sorts of humiliations in order to be friendly with them. On the first night in the hotel, he tells them, "Please don't be impatient."[2] He has so much to tell them that he wants to sit down, but because he is a priest, they turn "their heads away from him in disgust."[3] However, in spite of their stern refusal he wants them to know all his compassion for them since he saw how "both looked mighty wretched standing there on the corner."[4] He is full of

---

[1] p. 132.

[2] p. 10.

[3] p. 10.

[4] p. 11.

pity (for them) because of the meanness of their lives."[1] His interest in the girls springs from his Christian conception of the priceless human soul. In his outstanding self-sacrifice, he shows himself the true physician of souls when he tells them:

> I never felt so much sympathy for anybody in my life. I wanted to do something to help you so you wouldn't want to stand on the streets like that.[2]

In his method of approach, he reaches the souls of the girls in quite a different way than the "great big serious-looking priest" in "Absolution,"[3] for example. In this short story, Jennie Hughes is a drunkard and the priest has come into her home to give her "a very solemn warning."[4] His tone is, in fact, arrogant. It sounds like the surly hireling rather than the shepherd. Mrs. Hughes wants to know who sent him to her home. He is content to tell her, "I'm here and you can thank God that I came."[5] He seems to have no pity for her. Jennie tries to be polite with the priest, but he is "an old, serious, unsentimental priest who was not at all impressed

---

[1] p. 10.

[2] p. 11.

[3] Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959, p. 293-297.

[4] p. 294.

[5] p. 294.

by the fawning smile and the little bow she made for him."[1] He has a message for her, but it does not seem to be a message of love. Shaking his head to show his disgust with her, he said flatly:

> Mrs. Hughes, there's nothing more degrading in this world than a tipsy woman. A drunken man, Lord knows, is bad enough, but a drunken woman is somehow lower than a beast in the field.[1]

In judging Mrs. Hughes, the priest assigns her to a rank lower than the beasts. One could consider that the priest in "Absolution"--at least at first sight--would be a "good" priest for Bishop Foley in Such Is My Beloved. Jennie is appreciated the way Bishop Foley appreciated the prostitutes: not "more important than the sinfulness they represented." She is accosted without any consideration for her liberty as a human being and without any respect for her free will. As a last warning, the priest tells her, "If you don't change your life you'll go straight to hell."[2] The priest's attitude towards Jennie may be justified in certain cases, because some people seem to understand better when roughly handled. In Jennie's case, the priest succeeds in arousing in her an uneasy longing

---

[1] p. 294.

[2] p. 294.

> for a time she was hardly able to remember, a time when she had dressed well, gone to church, and gone to confession too when she was a much younger woman.[1]

Father Dowling had chosen quite another method in his attempt to bring the prostitutes back into the fold. He uses kindness. He takes every possible measure to ensure that he will not frustrate the aspirations of his two wretched souls. He even takes insults from them because he would "like to be friendly"[2] with them. His respect for them is truly a Christian one. It reminds one of the Last Supper. While Judas ~~is~~ on the verge of betraying the Master, Jesus remains very calm. He argues in no way with the traitor. He even accepts a kiss from him while He knows too well the horrible sin Judas has committed. Father Dowling shares this compassion for humanity. He does not summon the girls to listen to him, but he begs them to excuse him in his attempt to relieve their miseries. In his charity with the girls, the young priest is almost a living reproduction of the life of St. Vincent de Paul. The great saint, in his dealings with the poor and the sinners, knew that he had to beg them to excuse his charity towards them. To his spiritual sons, he writes in his book of rules:

---

[1] p. 295.

[2] Such Is My Beloved, p. 10.

> Our highest ambition is to instruct the ignorant, to bring sinners to repentance, and to plant the gospel spirit of charity, humility, meekness and simplicity in the hearts of Christians.[1]

Our young curate seems to have read St. Vincent de Paul for he realizes in his life what the saint preached and practiced in his own. The night he meets the prostitutes, he is ready to talk with them only if it does not interfere with their plans. "If you're not going any place. I mean if you're in for the night let's sit down and talk."[2] The prostitutes are moved by his goodness, and if they refuse to take his message on that first meeting, nevertheless they allow him to sit down "just to say a little prayer."[3] And before he goes, they see "somehow an expression of life in his eyes they had never seen before."[4] He does not visit them to "do any harm,"[5] but like the good shepherd full of compassion for the lost sheep, he visits them to know more about them, hoping one day to dress their wounds.

---

[1] Butler's Lives of the Saints, revised and supplemented by Herbert Thurston, S.J. and Donald Attwater, New York, vol. 3, P.J. Kennedy & Sons, 1956, p. 144.

[2] Such Is My Beloved, p. 10.

[3] p. 11.

[4] p. 12.

[5] p. 12.

After he meets the prostitutes, Father Dowling experiences "a joy he had never known before."[1] The fact that he has been able to talk to two souls in need of him delights him, for there is hope of bringing them to God. He assures them, "You don't seem low and you don't seem hopeless to me."[2] He is a real physician of souls. He is there to help, not to condemn. This is why he emphasizes the fact that one is responsible for his own good or bad deeds when he tells them, "without realizing it you may go from day to day making things harder till you yourselves lose all hope."[3] This is the real threat Midge and Ronnie could face some day: their callousness to sin.

Father Dowling shows the love that inspires his spiritual life when his goodness toward the prostitutes seems to grow in spite of their stubbornness in sin. One evening he knocks on their door with his usual eagerness. While he waits to hear if someone is in the room, his heart thumps in unison with "The Canticle of Canticles.":

> Is this the voice of my beloved that knocketh,
> saying, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove,
> my undefiled: For my head is filled with dew,
> My locks with the drops of the night."

---

[1] p. 13.

[2] p. 12.

[3] p. 18.

But he receives no answer. It is not safe for him to stand in the corridor of the hotel for "he knew that he ought to avoid giving scandal in the presence of ignorant people, who were ever anxious to sneer at the Church."[1] Waiting near the hotel, he sees Ronnie ducking in "with the man in the peak cap right behind her."[2] He is hurt, but he has only a charitable prayer for her: "God help her for her shamelessness."[3] Now he has to wait for that man to come out before he can see Ronnie. He suffers physically and mentally while he paces the sidewalk, for it seems "terrible that a mortal soul that he had loved and prayed for was being degraded almost within reach of him while he stood helpless on the street."[4] He is disgusted, but there in the snow he tells himself, "I'll wait just a little longer."[5] In this scene Father Dowling shows an almost divine attitude toward the wretched. For ingratitude, he has only goodness, kindness and patience.

The patience that helps Father Dowling to control himself, seems also superhuman. With all his difficulties,

---

[1] p. 18.

[2] p. 18.

[3] p. 18.

[4] p. 18.

[5] p. 19.

he never loses hope. He felt "sure that his presence and his eagerness had meant very much that other night to the two girls."[1] But now it seems to him he did not help them at all. He takes the first opportunity to let them know his feelings for them in words full of love: "You don't understand the anxiety a priest can feel for two girls like you. It was terrible to have to stand out there and know what was going on up here."[2] While the priest emphasizes the spiritual aspect of their lives, the girls are preoccupied with the material one as Midge tells him,

> "You have a good time talking about praying for us, don't you, but prayers won't help me get my hair curled. You can't eat prayers. How do you think we're going to live? Did you ever stop to figure that out?"[3]

As a matter of fact, the young curate had overlooked their basic necessity of life. Midge's "passion was so convincing that Father Dowling began to feel doubtful, as if there might be many things he did not understand."[4] He says, "There's no more degraded an existence than yours,"[5]

---

[1] p. 19.

[2] p. 21.

[3] p. 22.

[4] p. 22.

[5] p. 22-23.

but he admits, "Perhaps there are many things I don't altogether understand... I know it's hard to be hungry and a Christian."[1] From then on he knows "there was a whole economic background behind the wretched lives of these girls."[2]

Compassion is one of the most noticeable characteristics of Father Dowling's spirituality. As he delves into the lives of the girls, he sees that social conditions greatly modify spirituality. His patience is strengthened, for "they were not free but strongly fettered and he would not be so sure of judging them."[3] He loves and his love gives him a fatherly heart for the souls confided to his care. Simply reproaching them for their sinfulness won't help, so he decides "that he must try and help them to live decently."[4] His actual experience teaches him the error of another earlier delusion: "he himself had always thought of vice as yielding to the delights of flesh, as warmth and good soft living and laziness."[5] Now he finds that what a Redemptorist had preached "about the luxurious

---

[1] p. 23.

[2] p. 23.

[3] p. 23.

[4] p. 23.

[5] p. 22.

life of vice"[1] was not always true.

If one scrutinizes the spirituality that guides Father Dowling in his priestly work--for it is always as a priest that he helps the girls--a striking thing arouses the reader's curiosity: the priest's affection for the girls. When he is with them, time goes unnoticed. He stays with them as late as he can for "He would not go home while there was any chance of them going out on the street." He plans for them, "I'm going to try and get jobs for you."[2] He helps them with borrowed money. Offering "two five-dollar bills,"[3] he begs them, "Won't you let me help you until then?"[4] He says confidently, "You won't go on the streets if you don't need money."[5] While the lawyer will "under no circumstances"[6] meet the girls in their room, and the bishop sees them as low as "the sinfulness they represented,"[7] Father Dowling is not afraid to identify himself with these souls who have become

---

[1] p. 22.

[2] p. 25.

[3] p. 25.

[4] p. 25.

[5] p. 25.

[6] p. 87.

[7] p. 131.

"sort of nieces" to him. Every time he sees a girl "well dressed," living comfortably," he thinks of "the two girls who most concerned him in the world, and who were now his special care." They lived "in mean rooms and probably were often hungry."[1] To his communist frient Stewart he discloses his eagerness to help two girls "not in very good circumstances," adding, "I was wanting them to have new clothes for the spring."[2]

The reader who wants to understand Such Is My Beloved, needs first a good knowledge of the biblical source, for Father Dowling's whole life is based on this sacred song. The type of love which springs from the heart of the king and the daughters of Jerusalem, though a spiritual one, is expressed in fleshy terms. Marital love is the best symbol Solomon could have chosen to express in human terms the divine love God has for us. Spouses love each other in an unconditional surrender. And it is this true love which partakes in the divine plan of creation. In order to be creative, love must first be genuine. When the object of love is not loved for himself, he is not loved at all. True love tends to unite the lover with the beloved so that they become one. In his readings of "The Canticle of Canticles," Father Dowling seems to have "understood some of the secret rich

---

[1]p. 54.

[2]p. 54.

feeling of this love song, sung so marvelously that it transcended human love and became divine."[1] He loves the girls for themselves; he loves them as they are, not as he would reshape them.

Father Dowling finds in "The Canticle of Canticles" how love can be elevated to such a high level that it transcends any human love to become divine. The more he tries to understand love in the sacred song, the more enthusiastically he yields to the fact that love is exactly the same as that which ought to feed any Christian life. For love must be of the same nature as the source that generates it. Human life has been divinized by grace. Father Dowling sees that a Christian cannot evaluate himself completely if he thinks of himself as a mere human being. On the other hand he risks a worse catastrophe if he denies his human nature and tries to live as a mere spirit; he becomes a monster. A Christian is a human being divinized. While his human life retains all its exigencies, he is called to live with the dignity of a god, because he shares the life of God. Thus if the motif of human love ought to be divine to a certain extent,

---

[1] p. 78.

it can nevertheless be expressed only in human terms. This adaptation of the concept of love is exactly the precious jewel Father Dowling finds in the song of Solomon.

As "he prepares his sermon on human and divine love," Father Dowling "smiled with exultation."[1] Each line of the Canticle has its full meaning in his mind, for it is written about divine love, but in terms that he understands and feels from the depths of his soul.

> The bold sensual phrases of the love song startled him, stirred him and were full of such meaning that he read them over and over again.[2]

In apprehending all the power of the Divine Love permeating human love, his charity incites him to make "The Canticle of Canticles" a song of a love that all people ought to have for one another."[3] In helping the prostitutes he has experienced the sweetness of loving his neighbor as himself. And the love Father Dowling bears for the spiritual welfare of the two girls is somewhat like the love of a bridegroom for his bride. He looks at them like a bridegroom anxious to see his bride happy. He does everything he can to please them. He even borrows

---

[1] p. 78.

[2] p. 78.

[3] p. 78.

money for them, because "I don't want you to have to worry about how you're going to live."[1]

In a conversation with Midge, Father Dowling lays bear his feelings for the girls: "You two girls are very precious to me, almost more than the rest of my work."[2] He has a certain ambition to see them with his own people --the parochial family. He longs "to see Ronnie and Midge coming along the street in the crowd, well clothed."[3] On Sundays after Mass he stands by the church entrance and spies on people "wondering, 'Which one of them will I speak to? Which one will be kind enough to give me something for Ronnie and Midge?'"[4] He desires for them first of all what their human nature required: Bread and comfort. He tries to find them jobs, but he is unsuccessful. In his search for help he wonders "why God saw fit to permit so many people to have wealth and comfort, and so many to remain poor and hungry."[5] In the love song he finds the answer.

A true lover searches for his beloved in the steep

---

[1] p. 47.

[2] p. 46.

[3] p. 41.

[4] p. 79.

[5] p. 41.

place where human suffering abounds. He is the Good Samaritan whom Christ proposes as a model of a man loving his neighbor. Who is our neighbor? The wretched, the needy, the one who has fallen into the terrible hands of human miseries. Malcolm Ross writes in his preface to Such Is My Beloved that Callaghan "refuses to solve the 'social problem' in social terms,"[1] because human sufferings cannot be alleviated by justice. Only a true love for the neighbor, "a love that all people ought to have for one another," can help to rebuild a society on Christian principles. This is Father Dowling's ambition. "He had been advised to avoid controversial social problems"[2] in his sermons. In preaching the love of neighbor as an essential part of our love of God, he attacks one of the most controversial social problems of all times: must the wealthy love the poor and the wretched to go to heaven? Love excludes nobody and requires that everyone be given full recognition. He shouts, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."[3] Now what is the source of Father Dowling's understanding and spirituality? We find the answer in his contact with God

---

[1] p. iii.

[2] p. 78.

[3] p. 78.

through prayer.

In the midst of all his activities, Father Dowling spends much of his time in prayer. In fact he is a man of prayer. Whenever he grapples with difficulties, he has recourse to this powerful means of solving them. He seems to have an almost perfect knowledge of the human heart. He works with the prostitutes with a concern that can be understood only in the light of a true charity. They do not want to receive him, but he must reach their hearts, otherwise they will continue in that sinfulness. He cannot force his way in, for salvation is primarily a work of the will. In the galley of the Divine Love, there are only willing rowers. Each individual must work freely to prepare for eternity. Father dowling's task is to help the souls to bring the willingness to the building of their eternal life. It is a difficult task, because it requires that the will be moved by love towards an end very often misconceived in the blurred light of a faith almost extinct. The promise of punishment does not help. We have seen how the priest in "Absolution" tried to influence Jennie Hughes with "If you don't change your life you'll go straight to hell."[1] Jennie has answered him: "You can't force me to do anything I don't want to do."[2] And

---

[1] p. 294.

[2] p. 294.

after the priest left her home, Callaghan writes, "As a defiant gesture Jennie drained the last inch of whiskey from the bottle and muttered: 'Trying to drive me to confession, eh?'"[1]

With the prostitutes, Father Dowling has a case more difficult than Jennie's. Jennie wants the priest; the prostitutes, at first, refuse to hold any conversation with him. Ronnie tells him, "Go and peddle your pills next door."[2] If you want to talk, why don't you hire a hall?"[3] They want to throw him out of their room "for they couldn't understand his eager anxiety to be with them."[4] They are suspicious: "Somebody may have tipped him off to come here, else he's a bit daffy."[5] Midge tells him, "We'd throw you out only you're the kind of guy that would start to holler."[6] They try to persuade him to leave without making any noise for they fear arousing police attention. Father Dowling uses these few

---

[1] p. 295.

[2] Such Is My Beloved, p. 11.

[3] p. 10.

[4] p. 12.

[5] p. 10.

[6] p. 10.

moments of deliberation "to do something to help"[1] them. He says to them, "Just one minute, one minute can't make any difference to you. Let me sit down just that long and then I'll go and there'll be no trouble."[2] He cannot wait any longer. His "eagerness was so strong within him that he would not go" before he sits down "just to say a little prayer."[3]

Prayer is the main source of Father Dowling's spirituality. He uses this means of sanctification with all his heart. We see him on the "first Friday of the month, praying and contemplating the Blessed Sacrament."[4] He has put all his trust in God, and now he goes to Him with a conviction that demonstrates his faith. Callaghan portrays his attitude towards the Holy Eucharist in these words:

> There was so much fervent earnestness in the way his hands were clasped and the way his head was bent and motionless, that he seemed to have become a part of the bench.[5]

The Real Presence has captured his whole mind and body in kind of rapture that immobilizes his senses. He desires

---

[1] p. 11.

[2] p. 11.

[3] p. 11.

[4] p. 37.

[5] p. 37.

to be closer to God to enrich his spirituality while in the presence of the Master. The young priest has acquired this habit of prayer in his daily meditations on love. Love has become his theme of predilection in his contact with God.

The first night he meets the girls,

> before he went to bed he prayed for a long time for the souls of Ronnie and Midge. He prayed that he might have the full care of their souls so he could safeguard them. But the best part of his prayer was when he was absolutely silent and very calm.[1]

And there in his absolute silence he "could see Ronnie and Midge standing close together in the hotel room, dogged and puzzled."[2]

In this intense prayer, Father Dowling has a better understanding of all that human love can achieve; for when well understood, it can inspire the highest possible actions of heroism. Love, therefore, is a tremendous force in man. Since Father Dowling knows that the essence of divine love is God Himself, he relates his particular love to that of God. In God, love is so perfect that it is God Himself; and this love is a fatherly love. The source of perfection for man trying to become

---

[1] p. 16.

[2] p. 16.

love. In this contemplation of love, Father Dowling meditates on "the love of man for God;"[1] and as our love for God grows in proportion with our love for our neighbor, he begins "to think of Ronnie and Midge, feeling that his love for them was growing, so that he might try and love them in his way as God must love everybody in the world."[2] Thus Father Dowling finds in prayer one of the main sources of his love for the poor and the wretched. He sees in them his neighbor and understands their sufferings.

A spirituality permeated with an intense charity pervades his entire life. In the confessional his patience enables him to listen "tirelessly to girls and old men, and giving himself sympathetically to their sorrow for the slightest sin."[3] However, he is not a "scrupulous" minded confessor. He does not see sin where there is none. To a penitent who had "imagined herself full of remorse" for actions that normally are not sinful, he says:

> "You're entitled as a human being to certain judgments about your fellow creatures. Every time you have an opinion about your neighbor you're not committing a mortal sin."[4]

---

[1] p. 37.

[2] p. 37.

[3] p. 16.

[4] p. 16.

He knows the disastrous consequences that follow when a spiritual life is ruled by an erroneous conscience. As a confessor, his duty is to help his penitents build themselves a healthy Christian life. Christianity is a religion of joy, of happiness. When one is always tortured by worries of conscience, life becomes painful. The Christian must know that what counts in his life is charity. The priest himself has judged Mr. Henry Baer, the owner of the hotel where Midge and Ronnie live, with severity. "I decidedly don't like that man,"[1] the priest thinks to himself. This judgment remains within the limits of charity. It would be very naive to consider Mr. Baer a holy man when he "keeps a bawdy house."[2] Thus in the eyes of Henry Baer, Father Dowling is courting the two prostitutes to satisfy his carnal appetite. He feels a smug delight whenever he sees the priest enter his hotel. He usually says to himself: "There goes the lamb of God again."[3] He does not doubt the purpose of these visits for he only wonders

> which one he likes. Probably the little one. I'll ask her about him. He's the best-looking customer she ever had.[4]

---

[1] p. 59.

[2] p. 114.

[3] p. 59.

[4] p. 20.

The young priest makes an accurate judgment of Lou Wilenski, Ronnie's boy friend, when he decides "Lou's a bad actor, a bad character, I can see that."[1] As a matter of fact, Lou is a pander and a parasite upon Ronnie. He meets Father Dowling in the room with Ronnie. He does not like the priest even if he does not know him, for, as he told Ronnie, "I don't trust priests."[2] Now he has just caught him alone with her. He asks the priest, "How long have you been here with Ronnie?" He inquires about the time because he intends to ask him, "Well, you're going to pay her something, aren't you: What do you think she does for a living?"[3] For Lou the priest has no reason to visit the girls other than to satisfy his sexual desires.

It appears that all those who know about Father Dowling's interest in the two prostitutes are sure the priest courts the girls for carnal purposes. No one understands his eager anxiety to bring the girls to a normal Christian life. Even Mr. Robison, the eminent Catholic lawyer, "who had always been so willing to assist the priests in their charitable work,"[4] is astonished by

---

[1] p. 51.

[2] p. 35.

[3] p. 51

[4] p. 38.

the priest's misbehaviour with two prostitutes. While Father Dowling tries to foster an interest in him for the girls, he replies, "Lord in heaven, Father, you haven't let people see you going around there, have you?"[1] The lawyer is very serious about this whole matter, because he knows what everybody ought to think when a priest chums around with prostitutes. He is a conservative in matters of religion; as far as he is concerned, "birds of a feather flock together." He cannot ever stand the view of the hotel. "What a miserable little place,"[2] he says. And he asks the priest, "This is where you've been coming, Father?"[3] Just looking at the hotel and knowing that the two prostitutes work inside gives him a sudden fear that he expresses to the priest: "I imagine it would give you the greatest concern."[4]

The lawyer, however, is a man of some practical sense. While he thinks that "something has to be done"[5] to stop the priest from going around with prostitutes, he cautiously deliberates the matter. "Maybe I oughtn't to

---

[1] p. 83.

[2] p. 84.

[3] p. 85.

[4] p. 84.

[5] p. 97.

speak to the Bishop till I understand the nature of his feeling."[1] He has a certain respect for the young priest for

> Once at an ordination sermon he heard an exuberant old priest shout out that the young priest was just as pleasing to God as the Blessed Virgin. Complaining to the Bishop might be a little like striking at a priest.[2]

But he questions Father Dowling's behavior because "He's always been tainted with dangerous thinking."[3] He has proven in his sermons to be "a creature of excess."[4] And now he is making "fools of us all."[5] Assuredly, he sees in the priest a beardless young man grappling with his own passions. Thus what the lawyer thinks is quite what Henry Baer and Lou Wilenski thought, for he says to himself, "Lord knows what he's doing with those women and trying to get me to keep them for him."[6] However, "his own sense of duty"[7] tells him he ought to take a position and "it's not up to me. It's up to the Bishop."[8] The

---

[1] p. 97.

[2] p. 97.

[3] p. 97.

[4] p. 97.

[5] p. 98.

[6] p. 98.

[7] p. 96.

[8] p. 97.

lawyer, like the bishop later, is bound to act by his sense of duty. This is what he tries to show in his subsequent interview with the bishop.

With His Grace, Mr. Robison tries to appear much concerned for "a young priest" "in very grave trouble, trouble that doesn't just touch him but may touch us all."[1] In fact, he betrays the curate because "it was his duty to cherish the good name of his religion, especially in this very Protestant community."[2] He knows the young curate has been going

> night after night to see them, giving them money, giving them clothes and growing very fond of them.[3]

He shows some ill-will when he insinuates "They were more than friendly with him."[4] And as a "good" Judas who feigns fair play when he betrays, he ends his expose saying, "Now I'm not saying he wasn't trying to help them."[5]

As far as the bishop is concerned, it is now a clear cut fact that Father Dowling is courting two prostitutes, for the lawyer has insinuated that he is not helping

---

[1] p. 99.

[2] p. 96.

[3] p. 99.

[4] p. 100.

[5] p. 100.

that may turn people away from his financial drive. One of the best donors in his diocese is already overwhelmed with disgust. He must get rid of this young priest immediately.

Though he has dismissed Father Dowling's case "as an insignificant detail in a great plan"[1] in order to appease the lawyer, the bishop calls for the young curate. By now the priest has become a subject of controversy for a number of persons. Each one looks at Father Dowling's problem from his own point of view. Charlie Stewart thought the priest was wrong to look at the two prostitutes "as a religious problem. It's really an economic problem,"[2] he had insisted. The priest could not accept this point of view, because society cannot treat prostitutes with justice, but only with charity. For Mrs. Robison, the lawyer's wife, "all prostitutes are feeble-minded."[3] The curate answered her with much pain in his heart,

> That's a sociological point of view. It's not a Christian point of view. I'm ashamed to have heard it from you.[4]

---

[1] Such Is My Beloved, p. 102.

[2] p. 127.

[3] p. 94.

[4] p. 94.

For Bishop Foley, it is a problem of discipline. Of course he intends to solve it drastically for it cannot be admitted under the present circumstances that a priest would let himself wallow in the mire of sin, in company with "common prostitutes."[1] He is not forecasting what he will hear from Father Dowling in this interview, even though he could have learned much from the young curate on things pertaining to charity. But the bishop wants to deal with his priest as a superior ought to, with firmness and authority. It is obvious that the bishop is worried about sexual sin in the case of Father Dowling. His over-riding concern at the moment, however, is for the effect of the mere appearance of the violation of priestly chastity on his great charity "drive." In other words, even if Father Dowling is innocent, he is willing to sacrifice the young curate for the sake of the drive.

With Father Dowling, the bishop maintains a laconic tone filled with aloofness. He has a fair grasp of what has been going on. In brief terms, he states his point of view:

> I've heard you've been going continually to this hotel and seeing these girls and giving them things and staying with them nearly all night, and being seen on the street with them, and so on. You may have some explanation. I'd like to hear it, but it

---

[1] p. 129.

> seems to me you've been deliberately courting scandal, scandal in a community where we are in a minority, Father, and where the life of a priest in these matters must be above reproach.[1]

After such a goading talk, the bishop proves he is not destitute of all natural qualities that a superior should have. He follows up Father Dowling with unction: "I believe, of course, that you started out to help these girls, that's true, isn't it, Father?"[2]

In confessing bluntly that "the life of a priest in these matters must be above reproach," the bishop discloses the exact nature of his concern in regard to sex. Most revealing are the remarks of the bishop emphasizing his great interest in the need for clerical respectability. The bishop is by virtue of his priesthood, and the jurisdiction attached to it, a successor of the apostles. He is the keeper of the faith in his diocese. His main concern should be the spiritual benefits of his faithful. But Bishop Foley is first concerned with the temporal success of his diocese. The spiritual life of a priest for him is primarily a question of the moral life. He has reduced the core of the Christian life to a superficial observance of the moral code. Although

---

[1] p. 129.

[2] p. 130.

CHAPTER IV

"Chastity without charity
will be chained in hell."
(Piers the Plowman)

RELIGIOUS CONVENTIONS AND SPIRITUALITY

Convention in general is understood as an agreement on certain signs and customs acceptable and meaningful. It is a set of responses to given stimuli which presumably are understood by the people who use them as being necessary to provide a certain smoothness in conducting social relationships in their particular milieu. Each state of life has its peculiar conventions. Mainly these give a certain homogeneity to the group which is ruled by them. They are ways of expressing either a national custom (a Chinese belches to signify he has eaten well), or a local characteristic that shapes the people of different religions.

While most of our conventions are superficial, they have the appearance of being rooted in the very life of man. When we study the history of their formation, it is amazing to note the influence some of them exert in our social life. During the Middle Ages a young man

would bring his right hand in front of his eyes to show his beloved how bright she was. Later on, admitted as a sign of respect, this gesture was introduced into the armies as the "salute" an inferior owes to a superior; today saluting is among the rigid laws which rule the conduct of a soldier.

As a rule, conventions are necessary in a society, where life has become complex; agreements on signs of respect, pleasure, or even what must be prohibited in a society, are needed for the building of a healthy social structure.

From the very beginning of the Church, we find conventions ruling the behavior of the faithful during Mass. Some conventions came to be laws of the Church, as for instance the Mass vestments. Others always remained merely "conventional." Unfortunately, as Callaghan consistently hammers out, they are so numerous that it is almost impossible to name them all. But to indicate a few: the usage of the cassock and black suit for the priest is purely conventional, for it is not any more virtuous or priestly to wear black than green or white.

Conventions by their very nature are intended to serve certain people in a certain time in a certain place, and are not for all people in all time. The reason why

some conventions are immemorial lies in the fact that change is disagreeable to many people; routine is a parasite which saps the life of the great majority of men. An intellectual laziness renders them unable to draw the line between a healthy convention and a harmful one. And this unfortunate state of affairs sometimes bears harmful consequences in the lives of many people. Uncharitable conventions in many cases dictate the moral attitudes towards life, and much of the time they seem to influence people more than healthy conventions.

One short story, "An Autumn Penitent,"[1] skillfully discloses the human ruin resulting from social convention. Joe Harding and his wife Lottie, a non-Catholic married couple, lead a rather ordinary life up to the time Mrs. Harding discovers that Ellen, Joe's sixteen-year-old niece, is pregnant by uncle Joe.

Lottie's problem is not the pregnancy--nor its author. Rather, it is the convention involved: "What will people say?"[2] she asks. Amazingly enough, Uncle Joe survives the incident; but Lottie and her niece commit suicide. Callaghan uses them to show that certain persons are unable to surmount conventionality. Lottie

---

[1]"An Autumn Penitent," in A Native Argosy, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1929, pp. 163-259.

[2]p. 215.

and her niece realize the consequences of their action insofar as they are ending their lives. But they are helpless to act otherwise; their honor is gone, as far as they are concerned, and death is the only answer.

Such behavior is as remote from the New Testament as the Old Testament was. Though stockpiles of stones are not seen outside the gates of our cities and towns, Callaghan portrays how we kill people today with our tongue instead of lapidating them. In the Old Testament, at least a chance was given to the convict to reach the eternal goal, for he did not have to take his own life. Today, in the name of a corrupted interpretation of Christianity, we force people to ostracize themselves or to put an end to their own lives.

As Callaghan points out, most conservative persons identify conventions with virtue. In many Catholic environments a priest dressed in a sport shirt is judged unvirtuous, low and degraded. Conventions have become so strong in the minds of the self-appointed guardians of mores that, even to some Catholics, they are mistaken for rules of faith. Charity is a mere featherweight when put on the balance against a convention. Very few men endeavor to live according to the golden rule of charity; the masses are satisfied with being conventional.

One may think that the conventional man is to be

found only among the ignorant people. Unfortunately, supposedly highly educated people are satisfied with conventions rather than reality. For it is easier to live according to conventions than charity. Conventions rule only superficial social behavior - a man's inner self may be rotten, while society proclaims him virtuous, because society judges him according to its conventions.

Callaghan points out that in the Twentieth Century, conservative-minded people are still living in the Victorian Age when respectability became a primary virtue in certain cultures. "Respectable" people did not associate with sinners or other "unrespectable" people. Whenever "respectable" people were seen with the "unrespectable", they were automatically lowered to the rank--not only social but moral--of their companions. Although Victorian respectability has been long recognized as hypocrisy, in certain areas affected by social and moral convention, society still continues to react as the puritanical Victorians did.

Respectability in the Nineteenth Century was a false convention because it agreed that only certain types of sins were not to be mentioned in public. The virtuous were known by their abhorrence of these sins. Robbery, slavery, excess profits, these sins were not a barrier to respectability.

On the other hand, public and notorious drunkenness, notorious sexual indulgences--especially on the part of the poor--these things above all consigned one to social and moral perdition. As a consequence of their lopsided attitude, the Victorian English gradually arrived at the point where the most natural of sexual facts and functions were hidden away in silence, shrouded in an aura of shame and sin.

In the Church, the trend toward respectability had a very bad effect, especially in the Twentieth Century with its changing social patterns. In Such Is My Beloved, Callaghan shows how conventions prevented Father Dowling from making contact with the poor because they were not respectable. Their sins were known to everybody, while the rich, who were committing sins in the dark, were able to parade their virtue.

Particularly when franker and open discussion of sex has become general and the social contacts between the sexes have become freer and more natural, the clergy in a kind of timidity very often hide behind the screen of respectability, always ready to be shocked and virtuously scandalized at such things as immodesty in dress. They are horrified at the notion of being in the company of those who are known to lead impure lives.

Thus it seems to Callaghan that even with the

best of intentions, many of the clergy have abandoned the very persons who most desperately need their help. Pastors even today still refuse to open their doors to those reputed to be impure, socially or otherwise. A summary of the overall Callaghan theme might be contained in the action of a priest who was so conventional that he would drive from his door a prostitute seeking help, while at the same time he was preparing a Sunday sermon on the theme of Christ's compassion for Mary Magdalene.

One of the main causes of this blindness may be rooted in the ecclesiastical training the seminarian receives in his preparation for the holy priesthood. Seminaries very often do nothing to bring their charges to any sort of social and spiritual maturity, or give them any genuine insight into reality: conventions reigned and still reign in place of reality inseminaries.

Callaghan attacks these attitudes sharply in his novels, as well as in a 1962 issue of MacLean's where he expresses his thoughts on the relationship between sexual transgression and conventionalism.[1] In this essay he endeavors to show why any abuse in sex draws an irrevocable condemnation from the "pure," while indulgences

---

[1]"Why Single Out Sex as the Only Sure Road to Sin," MacLean's 73, Jan. 2, 1962, p.6, 32-3.

in any other form of sin very often are condoned by the same "pure" as meritorious. He starts his article by stating: "In our society with its Christian tradition, the sexual offender--no matter how terrible or how trivial his real offense against humanity--bears singular odium and shame..."[1] If we look at our contemporary society, we notice that "the looter of the public purse, the burglar, the thug, are very small potatoes compared with him."[2] If this is true, genuine morality has lost a great deal of its influence on our individual as well as social behavior. Perhaps we do not want to believe that sex has become the only sin that could stain one's life, but as Callaghan points out, the conventional person believes this is true. In his article, the author shows hoe we have reduced morality to a matter of sex. If a person is "sexually" pure from any public charge, he ought to be a respectable person. The question does not go as far as scrutinizing the heart of that person to know if he is "pure" in his inner life. A gentleman ought not to judge one of his kind. If the surface is socially unscathed, the person is morally judged a good Christian.

---

[1] p. 6.

[2] p. 6.

It has come to be as ridiculous, as Callaghan points out in this work:

> A lawyer, defending a murderer, will try to help his client by showing that no matter how unfortunate his little slip into violence, he is a faithful husband who never chased a floozie, and therefore in spite of his violent crime, not essentially an immoral man.[1]

We are content to be conventional Catholics, because it is so easy to save a convention through respectability. One can live a superficial life, be thought of as a "good" Christian, if he only avoids a court sentence. Social behavior is required not on account of charity, but on account of the public opinion which is ruled by conventions.

When Callaghan mentions that "these views ought to be expounded for they still color our thinking on the matter."[2] he aims particularly at the religious leaders. They are the shepherds whose task is to lead their sheep to the fold. Charity is the only road to heaven. But when a clergyman frowns on a sexual offender, it is true that he acts in unison with the Fathers of the Church. He is ready to resent anyone who would dare to tell him that his detestation for a prostitute, for instance, is

---

[1] p. 6.

[2] p. 6.

entirely un-Christian. He thinks he does a charitable work in stoning a sex offender, for the Fathers of the Church seem to have been merciless in their breathless effort to exterminate this source of evil in man.

Along this line Callaghan writes, "For example, in Tertullian's view, woman is the source of sin, for it was Eve who was able to tempt Adam, when the devil himself couldn't do it."[1] For Tertullian, woman was "the gate of hell."[2] He continues

> The final odium, the ultimate uneasiness about the sex act, was achieved by Saint Augustine when he taught that the original sin of Adam and Eve was transmitted from generation to generation by way of copulation."[3]

However, the Fathers of the Church did not scorn only sex, but any worldly delight which could lead people to sin.

> The next world became so real to them that they wanted to turn away in an exaltation of the spirit from all the delights of this world...These Christians hadn't made that gross separation between sex and other worldly delights such as the love of power and money.[4]

In these lines, Callaghan shows that he has thoroughly understood why sex has become for us today, "the only

---

[1] p. 32.

[2] p. 6.

[3] p. 32.

[4] p. 32.

real road to sin."[1] Our modern world has kept the traditional contempt of the Fathers for sex, but it has abandoned their religion. To the early Christians,

> With the light of eternity in their minds, all that was rich, worldly, powerful, colorful, giving the senses of ecstatic pleasure, was as nothing; it was all of the flesh, and they wanted to turn away from it.[2]

Thus sins of the flesh were frowned upon equally with any other sin against the ten commandments. Moreover, because of the general attitude that the flesh was weak, "Saint Thomas Aquinas could recognize the dreadful necessity of the prostitutes, as Saint Augustine had done before him."[3]

In North America, the general attitude toward sex is more one of disgust than recognition. This is Callaghan's attitude and he bolsters it with a historic argument dating from the seventeenth century:

> In the Seventeenth Century, it seems to me, the peculiar Christian aberration of the conscience about sexual matters really flowered. We have inherited it as an attitude, the proper attitude. Why do I call it an aberration? In Seventeenth Century England, when the Puritans took over, for my money they did a neat trick. On the surface, the ghosts of old Tertullian, Augustine, and those early Christian fathers who saw in sex the very flower of the flesh, something to be turned away from, ought to have been having a field day. The

---

[1] p. 6.

[2] p. 32.

[3] p. 33.

> neat trick was, though, that the Puritans didn't turn away from other worldly concerns. They were excellent businessmen. They went about acquiring lands and worldly possessions for all they were worth. Of the things of the world, then, it was only sex that was to be treated as something specially sinful, specially indecent, the only thing that stirred men to shame and lunacy.[1]

This has been, and still is, the general attitude people have towards sex and other worldly delights. In our society, where Christian forms have a great influence on the social and moral behavior of societies as well as individuals, one can get away with almost anything except sexual misconduct. It even appears at times that this erroneous attitude has the sanction of many religious leaders, as can be seen from general current reporting.

When Nikita Khruschev visited Hollywood and "saw them making a picture of the can-can, he quickly pronounced it immoral,"[2] and we found many newspapers praising the Russian statesman for his highly moral standards. But at the same time not a few of these newspapers overlooked Khruschev's guilt in sending his tanks into Hungary to exterminate thousands of lives solely to perpetuate his power. Few thought of him as an immoral

---

[1] p. 33.

[2] p. 6.

man for his monstrous crimes against humanity and God. Many still persist in finding him guilty only of a desire to spread Communism, forgetting that the case against Khrushchev is founded on a much deeper immorality. In fact, Khrushchev himself may not think his actions on the world scene immoral, although he is obviously conventional in his approach to sex.

We Christians are responsible for such an aberration of the Christian conscience, for we still continue to approve this general attitude which limits morality to the field of sex. When we make a judgment on the value of an action or even of a person, we do not have recourse to charity; we fall back on the criterion of convention. Respectability is the source which feeds our private as well as our social behavior. When a bishop, for instance, refuses to talk to one of his priests because he does not happen to be wearing his cassock, it is quite apparent that he is not inspired by charity, but by a convention that has nothing to do with the priesthood. He is a conventional bishop, an administrator and a disciplinarian. Such a bishop creates in his people a great sense of respect for conventions at the expense of charity. People learn from their religious leaders how to behave themselves as social beings as well as individuals.

In Such Is My Beloved Callaghan attacks a Catholicism based on convention instead of on charity. He uses Bishop Foley and the Robisons purposely to show that overextended religious conventions hurt not only the less educated but also those whose positions imply that they should be aware that Christianity is a matter first of charity, not convention. With dexterity he shows the results that follow when a religious leader is primarily preoccupied with following a convention at the expense of charity.

In Father Dowling he portrays a priest whose great adversary is not the devil, but social conventions. In his endeavors to rescue two prostitutes, the young curate is betrayed by those in whom he has placed all his trust. Perhaps one could say that Father Dowling shows his innocence by carrying on his priestly life in such an unconventional way. At first sight his visits to the prostitutes astonish the reader, for he is a priest who dares to talk to two public sinners. But in doing so, is he not living his Christian life according to Christianity?

What is so innocent in Father Dowling's behavior with the prostitutes? Only that he thinks that all good Christians ought to feel the way he does for the wretched. He is aware that a social convention forbids him to talk

to prostitutes. He is careful in his visits to the hotel, for he does not want to be recognized as a priest by ignorant people, who will judge him as a fallen-away priest. But he expects much more from so-called educated Catholics. He is sure that the Robisons will understand his apostolate as a priest, for, as he knows, Christ did not come primarily for the healthy but for the sick. However, the Robisons cannot understand his love for the prostitutes. They think his innocence is the cause of misconduct that may lead him to perpetrate a scandal which would tear the local church to pieces.

In this same vein, Christ must have been the greatest innocent of all times when he listened to Mary Magdalene. Nevertheless, if we remember the words of the Gospels, those who saw Him with her expressed their disgust for His misbehavior. For them it was a proof that He was a sinner for He associated with public sinners.

In looking at the Robisons, we find that men have not changed after two thousand years of Christianity. The lawyer looks at Father Dowling's behavior with the same disgust as the Pharisees had for Jesus. It is a sign that the Robisons have a religious mind which has never evolved from the Old Testament to the New Testament of love. While they try hard to be good Catholics, they reject Christ because He associates with the sinners.

They feel it is a very painful rejection; however, they feel forced to it in order to satisfy the exigencies of their religion.

In penetrating the apostolic activities of Father Dowling, Callaghan shows how people become monstrous Christians when faith is not based on charity. In the light of religious conventions which inspire them, the Robisons are prominent Catholics. They act with great dignity in all their social encounters. Religion for them is a question of salvation. They would never miss Mass on Sundays and the holy days of obligation. Moreover, they do not limit their Catholicism to the observance of the Mass. They lead any social activity sponsored by their parish. Mr. Robison experiences great joy every time he must dig into his pockets to help the pastor finance the parish.

For her part, Mrs. Robison leads the Catholic ladies of the parish in social action. She receives them in her own home whenever the parish requires a drive for fund raising purposes. She gives "splendid leadership to all her co-religionists in the nicest social matters."[1] However, both become the deadly enemies of Father Dowling when he calls on them to help two

---

[1] Such Is My Beloved, p. 90.

prostitutes.

Mr. and Mrs. Robison are bitterly uncharitable towards Ronnie and Midge because they are forbidden by a social convention to help prostitutes. No "good" person may associate with them in any way, for people will think the "good" have prostituted themselves. For Mrs. Robison especially, prostitutes are so low that she cannot tolerate them in her home. As soon as she learns the truth about the two girls, Callaghan writes, "she had condemned the girls forever."[1] Her resentment for them is so powerful that she uses every means at her disposal to insult them. If anyone should see these two strumpets in her home, scandal would result. Therefore, she tells everybody, "I've called a taxi for the girls, if you don't mind."[2] To Father Dowling she expresses her disgust for the girls, and at the same time, her disapproval of the dirty trick he played on her when she tells him, "I must say, Father, I don't thank you for bringing streetwalkers into my house."[3] When Father Dowling tries to show her the uncharitable nature of her

---

[1] p. 92.

[2] p. 92.

[3] p. 93.

behavior, Mrs. Robison is too conventionally Catholic to understand the meaning of Christian charity.

In her eagerness to condemn Father Dowling's attitude towards the prostitutes, she shows the reader the source of her spiritual life when telling the priest: "I might as well tell you I think the whole business too scandalous to be believed."[1]

In Mrs. Robison, Callaghan portrays the perfect type of conventional Catholic woman. Mrs. Robison has proven in many ways that she intends to be a good Catholic. However, we discover how she is hampered by social conventions. She is concerned only with public opinion. She is afraid of losing her dignity not only as a member of the Catholic Church, but also as a human being if she deals with outcast people. She was brought up in a very puritanical environment, where impurity was the only sin. Any person guilty of such an offense was to be rejected by "good" people, as a sinner to be hidden away and forgotten. Thus Midge and Ronnie could not be objects of her charity, for charity towards prostitutes is foolishness: a prostitute is already Satan's victim.

When Father Dowling tells her that he has "been

---

[1] p. 93.

more scandalized in this house tonight than I've ever been in my life,"[1] she seizes the occasion to let him know that his innocence is the root of his moral misconduct: "You probably haven't much experience in these matters. That's the trouble, Father."[2] Maybe this is a fitting tribute to Morley Callaghan. It is possible that what he means in his professional life can be summed up by the words, "You haven't had much experience in these matters." This is his thesis against the uncharitable priest.

---

[1] p. 93.

[2] pp. 93-94.

CONCLUSION

To plumb the depths of an author is to seek to understand through the patterns of his works how he has studied man in his wretchedness as well as in his nobility. For as Callaghan himself puts it:

> The writer's problem is somehow or other to catch the tempo, the stream, the way people live, think, and feel in their time, quite aside from any intellectual attitude to the matter.[1]

If we pause for a moment of retrospection amid the developing body of literature which Callaghan has bequeathed to future generations, it becomes evident that the author has stimulated himself by studying man. To penetrate man as he is -- and at the same time to show this man as he should be -- is the work of a mind which has seen man in the totality of its humano-divine context. For if man is seen only as a mortal being, he is robbed of what enobles him as a son of God. If, on the other hand, man is evaluated only according to the divine life of which he is a partaker, he loses the sense of what makes him what he is: a composite of a body and of a soul, fallen and redeemed. Morley Callaghan evinces his intellectual

---

[1]Robert Weaver, "A Talk with Morley Callaghan," Tam. Vol. 7, Spring 1958, p. 5.

capacities as a writer by holding to those two aspects of man which make him a pilgrim of eternity.

With his first novel the author gives a brief exposition of the problem that will hold his mind through his whole career: how man could live in time and be a pilgrim of eternity. He does not limit the problem to those of his faith only, but he sees it as a universal one. Thus his characters are non-Catholics as well as Catholics. Because a parishioner will be what his pastor teaches him to be, Callaghan emphasizes the necessity of genuine spirituality in a religious leader. Such a one will build his parish on the great commandment of love. This commandment of love is the motivation of all of Callaghan's novels. The anthithesis of his novels is conventionality arising to challenge this love for he sees it as being challenged by conventions. His Christian doctrine shows charity triumphant -- in one form or another -- over the varying forms of conventionality.

The pervasive influence of social conventions rooted in an anti-Christian bias is not to be found only in the fictional writings of the author. Callaghan has seen these forces ruling the life of individuals as well as the life of societies. He has seen all the devastating consequences of these conventions, and he has made it a point to help society to abolish these conventions.

As a Christian he sees only one remedy: charity. It is in loving each other that people will excuse in others all that makes themselves sinners. In order to reach his goal Callaghan has his own method. At the beginning of his career, he deals with ordinary people and shows how the life of each one is affected by public opinion and sometimes completely ruined.

As the years go by, Callaghan gives us a deeper insight into the anti-Christian conventions that are sapping the spirituality of the Church. He shows that these conventions are not only dominating the life of the laity, but they have enthralled within their fatal and narrow standards even the hierarchy of the Church. Father Dowling in Such Is My Beloved suffers a crushing defeat. No one except his bishop could have inflicted it on him. The bishop could not tolerate Father Dowling's charity for two prostitutes because this charity would give offense to the prudery of the world. As Huge McPherson puts it:

> From the point of view of "the world" Father Dowling's practical application of the principle of all-embracing love (his conviction that two prostitutes of his parish are as worthy of love as its greatest do-gooders) is a scandalous breach of propriety. The temporal Church, fearing for its good name in the community, treats Father Dowling as sick-mad, and turns the prostitutes over to the law.[1]

---

[1]Hugo McPherson, "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan," in Queens Quarterly, Vol. 64, 1957-1958, p. 357.

Of course Father Dowling's opposition does not come only from the bishop. If the Robisons' behaviour appears paradoxical, we ought to remember that it is in the name of religion that Mrs. Robison convinces her husband to alert the bishop before a scandal may down the feeble vestige of Catholicism in the parish. Even if those girls are begging for help, she dramatically refuses to consider their request for she is too "Catholic" to rank with the sinners. This same observation has been made about Christ himself when the Apostles caught Him conversing with the Samaritan. They immediately thought that birds of a feather flock together. And the Apostles thought themselves as smart as we do when to judge Jesus they used this conventional standard which ranked as a handy rule-of-thumb among the first Christians just as it does today. Jesus did not seem to heed this convention, for Mary Magdelene, that public sinner, not only sees her sins all forgiven by the Master Himself, but she is called to serve Him in His daily need. On many occasions Christ publicly declared that He had come especially for sinners. However, Callaghan points out that certain elements of Christianity have made a dichotomous belief of their religion since Christ has left the earth, for it is as firm disciples of Jesus that the Robisons refuse to help the two poor girls for fear of associating with sinners.

To satisfy their love for the Church they agree that something has to be done. What seems to them the unique solution for the betterment of the Church is to betray the apostolate of this priest to a worldly bishop.

In the character of Mr. Robison, Callaghan has portrayed the believer who is grateful to a hierarchy which is by divine right the teacher and guardian of his faith. The fact that he goes to the bishop does not constitute a betrayal, for the bishop is by the very nature of his priesthood the pastor of his flock; a diocesan subject can always refer to his bishop questions of faith and morals. Therefore, if the lawyer doubts the motives of Father Dowling's interest for the girls, he should be encouraged to go to his bishop, for the bishop is there to rectify what is not according to charity. And Callaghan points out the relationship that should unite the bishop with his flock, a relationship based on paternity and filiation. Mr. Robison meets his bishop with all the respect due to the bishop's authority, yet in the attitude of filial love toward his spiritual father. There is no question in Mr. Robison's mind about the propriety of discussing this matter with the bishop. Here Callaghan shows himself a son of the Church when he describes the filial submission of Mr. Robison to his bishop. The lawyer does not see a worldly lord

in the bishop, but a father whose charge is to lead his flock to heaven. Perhaps today the notion of episcopal lordship has changed the notion of the pastor in the mind of the faithful to such an extent that no one dares to meet his bishop.

The failure of Bishop Foley is a proof that the administrative quality alone is not enough to render a man suitable for episcopacy. Bishop Foley betrays a weak spiritual life because formalism and sentimentality have moulded him. Charity does not dictate his attitude toward his priests nor toward his faithful. He has the opportunity to help Father Dowling; he refuses because his sentimentality predominates when he realizes how he will lose Mr. Robison if he does not punish the priest. Respectability, of course, is the only "social virtue" a priest ought to nurture. Father Dowling's intolerable breach of respectability must be dealt with and the bishop uses all his authority to encourage Mr. Robison in his formalism.

When Callaghan exposes all the difficulties and the obstacles which hamper his characters on their way to heaven, he does it with a definite purpose. Divine love is Callaghan's Catholicism. Be his character a layman or a bishop, for Callaghan the success of each life resides in the fulfilment of charity, the only source of

a genuine spirituality. Our author does not nurture the myth that the world as such will ever live according to the commandment of God's love. Father Dowling shows once again the fate of the Christian who endeavours to live according to charity. Few could accept such an end to their career and their lives. But is Father Dowling's life truly a failure: Hugo McPherson analyzes Father Dowling's life in these words:

> But where the judgment of the law, the Marxist, or the social worker would be final (since of the world) the judgment of the Church is not final. Father Dowling is as much a part of the Church as his worldly bishop is, and his suffering and disgrace (his "crucifixion") does not rob him of his perception of the timeless fullness of Christ's love. Thus though Father Dowling has failed by our temporal standards in his quest, he has, in the best sense of the Christian faith, triumphed.[1]

Thus in Father Dowling's apparent defeat, Callaghan has portrayed the believer whose spirituality is based on charity, the only route for the successful pilgrim.

This is Father Dowling: this is Morley Callaghan and his artistic thesis. The artist who builds his works on a true Christian basis is really never popular -- he wounds too many conventional Christians. Possible this is the reason that underlies Edmund Wilson's statement

---

[1]Hugo McPherson, "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan," in Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, Autumn 1957. p. 358.

when he says:

> The reviewer, at the end of this article, after trying to give an account of these books, is now wondering whether the primary reason for the current underestimation of Morley Callaghan may not be simply a general incapacity -- apparently shared by his compatriots -- for believing that a writer whose work may be mentioned without absurdity in association with Chekov's and Turgenev's can possibly exit in our day in Toronto.[1]

---

[1] Edmund Wilson, "Morley Callaghan of Toronto," in The New Yorker, Vol. 36, Nov. 26, 1960, p. 237.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Callaghan, Morley Edward, A Broken Journey, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932, 270p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, A Native Argosy, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1930, 371p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, A Passion In Rome, Toronto, Macmillan, 1961, 352p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, A Strange Fugitive, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928, 264p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "Absolution," in Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1959, p. 293-297.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, It's Never Over, Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited at St. Martin's House, 1930, 225p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, More Joy in Heaven, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1937, 7-278p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959, 364p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, Now That April's Here, And Other Stories, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1936, 316p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, Such Is My Beloved, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1960, xiii-144p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, The Loved and The Lost, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1951, 234p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, The Many Coloured Coat, Toronto, Macmillan, 1960, 318p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, They Shall Inherit the Earth, Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, at St. Martin's House, 1835, 337p.

Magarshack, David, Chekhov, A Life by, New York, Grove Press, 1952, 431p.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "A Girl With Ambition," in Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959, p. 224-230.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "An Autumn Penitent" in A Native Argosy, Macmillan Company, 1929, p. 163-259.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "In His Own Country," in A Native Argosy, Toronto, Macmillan Company, 1929, p. 261-371.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "The Young Priest," in Morley Callaghan's Stories, Toronto, Macmillan, 1959, p. 180-186.

Callaghan, Morley Edward, "Why single out sex as the only real road to sin?", in MacLean's Magazine, Vol. 73, January 2, 1960, p. 6; 32-33.

Canby, Henry Seidel, "Such Is My Beloved," in Saturday Review of Literature, Vol. 10, March 10, 1934, P. 535.

McPherson, Hugo, "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan," in Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, Autumn 1957, p. 350-365.

Moon, Barbara, "The Second Coming of Morley Callaghan," in MacLean's Magazine, Vol. 73, December 3, 1960, p. 19; 62-64.

The Catholic World, Vol. 139, April 1934, p. 122.

Watt, F.W., "Morley Callaghan as a thinker," in The Dalhousie Review, Autumn 1959, p. 305-313.

Weaver, R.L. "A Talk With Morley Callaghan," in Tamarack Review, No. 7, issue of spring 1958, p. 3-29.

Wilson, Edmund, "Morley Callaghan of Toronto," in The New Yorker, Vol. 36, November 26, 1960, p. 224-237.