

J.M.J.
Seton Home Study School

WEEK 11

Day 1. Read pp. 125 - 134, the famous story of “Mandy of the Crackenshaws,” by Enid Dinnis. The supernatural gift of faith is such a wondrous thing! Will we ever appreciate it enough?

1. Many bigoted, prejudiced people who know little or nothing of the Catholic Church, view it only from the outside as simply another church. However, in this story Mandy has the good fortune of viewing the Catholic Church from the inside when he goes there as a pickpocket. What are some of the sacramentals, devotions, or sacraments in the church that deeply impress Mandy and open his eyes and mind to the love, beauty, and awe found in the Catholic Church?

2. While Mandy is sitting and observing in the church, “A wonderful homey feeling suddenly became connected with this place, where every single thing was of astounding unusualness, something outside experience and altogether satisfying.” In what ways is this Catholic church “homey” and “satisfying” to Mandy in the way it welcomes him and provides for essential needs?

3. During his stay in this Catholic church, Mandy finds himself in a state of awe and wonder. He falls “under a spell,” and he feels he has entered a marvelous “fairylane” and feels he is experiencing a “divine fantasy.” He immediately recognizes that the great wonders he encounters in this church surpass all the excitement of the motion pictures. What great mysteries does Mandy encounter in church that make all the entertainment provided by modern video culture — movies, television, videotapes, computer games — insignificant and trivial?

Day 2. Do "Helps for Study" and "Class Discussion" on p. 135.

Day 3. Review Fr. Feeney’s biographical sketch on p. 14. Then read his description of heaven on pp. 136 - 139 in “Heaven in a Pond.” Do "Helps" and "Class Discussion" on p. 139. Even if we never have the opportunity of a holy priest to teach us in person, we can learn through reading the words of holy men.

1. In this autobiographical story, Father Feeney writes, “I came to learn by analogy what heaven was like” — a statement that recalls St. Paul’s words about the “invisible” things of God being made known by the things that are “visible.” How do these statements apply to “Heaven in a Pond?” That is, how do we grasp the invisible world through the visible image of a pond?

2. Father Feeney’s understanding of heaven involves an important distinction. He explains that heaven is not a place of “super-sunsets in the west, super-breezes on the lake, super-flowers in the garden.” Likewise, a heaven for fish would not just be a cleaner pond with fresh sand and one free of rubbish. In other words, heaven is not just a more perfect, more beautiful natural world but a supernatural world. Explain this distinction.

3. Father Feeney explains that there is no comparison between life in the form of a child and in the form of a grub worm, between human laughter and a soggy gurgle, between

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starlight and mud. Explain why a child, laughter, and starlight are greater, higher, more divine realities than a grub worm, a gurgle, and mud.

Day 4. Write a paragraph under "Composition: Written," No. 1, p. 139. This is for you to think about and then write about.

WEEK 12

Day 1. The selections grouped under "Personal Ideals" have reference to the sacredness of the individual and the place of ideals in character formation. Read the introduction on p. 142. Next read pp. 143 - 145, "The Shepherdess" by Alice Meynell.

1. The central metaphor in this poem is the comparison of a person guarding her thoughts as a shepherdess watches over her sheep. Why must thoughts, like words, be guarded and checked?
2. Sheep graze on "the fragrant height," roam in "maternal hills," and dwell in "dark valleys safe and deep." In other words, they are not wandering or ungoverned but safe and secure. In that way they remain innocent or untouched, their whiteness symbolizing their purity. How does the guarding of thoughts and words also protect a person's innocence or purity, inviting the "chastest stars" to "peep?"

Read the poem "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer, if you can find a copy. Do Helps for Study on pp. 143 & 145. Read about this very popular Catholic poet in the encyclopedia. Read the poem "Martin" by Joyce Kilmer.

1. A "workaholic" is a person who lives in order to work instead of working in order to live. He usually measures success in terms of money, fame, promotions, and a high standard of living. A workaholic is so consumed by work and success that he often fails to cultivate human relationships and fails to appreciate the things that make life worth living: friendship, love, beauty, play, and worship. In his grim seriousness about work and money, the workaholic loses his capacity to enjoy life's simple, exquisite pleasures, and he lives a drab, monotonous, unexciting life. In what ways is Martin the opposite of a "workaholic?"
2. Joyce Kilmer says that Martin "exhaled romance," "wore an overcoat of glory," and possessed a "genius of appreciation." What qualities of his character do these refer to?

Day 2. Read the two poems by Walter de la Mare and one by Emily Dickinson on pp. 146-148. Do all "Helps for Study." The poets show that you can write about anything in a poem. If you haven't already, try to write some poetry.

1. Read the following passage from the prose of the Victorian poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., and explain how Walter de la Mare's poem "Miss T." arrives at the same truth about the person that Hopkins presents:

"When I consider my self-being, my consciousness and feeling of myself, that taste of myself, of I and me above and in all things which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnut leaf or camphor, and is

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incommunicable by any means to another man (as when I was a child I used to ask myself: What must it be to be someone else?): Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own. Nothing explains it or resembles it, except so far as this, that other men to themselves have the same feeling.”

2. It is very common for young people to complain about being bored and “having nothing to do,” and often blame others or the place for their boredom. However, according to medieval Catholic writings on the seven deadly sins — pride, avarice, lust, gluttony, envy, jealousy, sloth — boredom results from the sin of sloth or laziness and is a lack of will power. How does de la Mare show that in “Tired Tim,” “poor tired” Tim’s boredom results from his laziness, his sin of sloth?

3. In Emily Dickinson’s “I’m Nobody! Who Are You?”, why does the speaker prefer to be “nobody” rather than “somebody,” and which Christian virtue corresponds to the willingness to be nobody?

Day 3. Read “Sometimes,” by Thomas Samuel Jones, p. 148. Robert Browning wrote, “A man’s reach should exceed his grasp/Or what’s a heaven for?” A person should be inspired by ideals that he strives to incorporate into his life. In “Sometimes” how does the poet indicate that the boy was inspired by ideals that he did not completely realize in his later life?

Day 4. Read the play “Confessional” by Percival Wilde on pp. 149 - 158. A great story, a great message! Was Baldwin tempted by his family in the end?

1. One of the important principles of the Catholic faith is that one must never do evil in order to accomplish good. As Pope Paul VI writes in *Humanae Vitae*, “It is not licit, even for the gravest reasons, to do evil so that good may follow therefrom.” How is Mr. Baldwin’s family asking him to do evil in order to accomplish good?

2. The first of the Ten Commandments teaches us to love God first: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” Christ said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be yours as well.” How does Baldwin put God first in his life and honor His laws before all other considerations?

3. Father John Laux’s book, *Catholic Morality*, distinguishes between true and false conscience in the following way:

a. “A true conscience speaks the truth; it tells what is truly right and truly wrong. It is a genuine echo of the voice of God.”

b. “A false or erroneous conscience tells us that something that is really wrong is right, and something that is really right is wrong.”

How does Baldwin illustrate the definition of a true conscience, and how do the members of his family illustrate the meaning of false or erroneous conscience?

Notice the bottom of p. 153, Baldwin speaks “with simple pride.” He is proud of his reputation. On p. 157, he asks his family, “You want me to take this money?” And then, “If I take this money, I do a dishonorable thing.” Analyze whether or not you think Baldwin was ready to take the money or to continue to refuse the money. On page 157, he calls his family names, and says he is like them. What does that mean? Why does Baldwin want his son to “look into [his] eyes”? Is he looking for approval? The son asks

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“Why did you refuse [the money]? Wasn’t it because you were afraid of what we’d say?
How does Baldwin answer?”

Day 5. Read Wilde’s biographical sketch pp. 158 - 159. Do "Helps for Study" on p. 159. Read the "Class Discussion," "Further Enjoyment," and "Composition." Think about the topics under Composition.

WEEK 13

Day 1. Read “The Besieged of the Alcazar,” pp. 160 - 165. As you read, note the sources Juan draws upon for his strength and courage. Read about the Alcazar in the encyclopedia.

1. One of the saints has remarked that one must pray as if everything depended on God and act as if everything depended on man’s efforts. How does Juan Cabala illustrate this ideal?
2. Juan Cabala would inspire those defending the Alcazar with him by reminding them of the Cid, Ignatius of Loyola, Queen Isabella, and Don Juan of Austria. What does Juan have in common with these great men and women?
3. How does Communism reveal its atheism in this story?

Day 2. Do "Helps for Study" and "Class Discussion" on p. 165.

Day 3. The unit “Man and His Work” shows that labor may be an inspirational dedication of a man’s talents to a worthy cause. Read the introduction on p. 166 and Angela Morgan’s selection, “Work: A Song of Triumph,” on p. 167. Do "Helps for Study" on p. 168.

1. In the four stanzas of this poem the poet speaks of four aspects of work: “the might of it,” “the pride of it,” “the pace of it,” and “the swing of it.” To what do these refer?
2. In each stanza the poet thanks God for work, “For a world where none may shirk—
/Thank God for the splendor of work,” suggesting that the ability to work and contribute to the common good is a gift from God. Explain how man’s work in the world resembles God’s handiwork in the Creation. That is, how does man show his God-like nature in his ability to do good work?

Day 4. Read “The Dignity of Labor” on pp. 168 - 170, which was written when Bishop Sheen was a monsignor. He wrote a small book called “Seven Last Words” which is perfect for meditation. Read more about Bishop Fulton Sheen in the encyclopedia and if you have time locate one of his books and read it.

Bishop Sheen was a very famous radio and television personality. He was responsible for many conversions. Some older people believe that our pagan society needs another Catholic hero such as Bishop Sheen.

Keep the Faith, an organization that promotes Catholic media, has duplicated onto videotape several of Bishop Sheen’s television shows. If anyone has a tape in your area, you may like to borrow it and see a famous and holy man as well as learn something more about the faith. He was a real storyteller as he taught the faith and Protestants