

HEAVENLY HUMOUR

There was once an elderly gent who had an incredible knack of predicting the future. When people asked him how he did this, he claimed that he had regular conversations with God, and God would tell him what would happen. One fellow, wanting to have a little fun, asked the old man, "Can you tell me if I will go to Heaven?"

The old man said that he would bring up the subject that evening and try to get an answer for him. A couple of days later, they met again, and the fellow asked if he had an answer to his question. The elderly gent responded, "Well, yes, but there is some good news and some bad news for you. The good news is that yes, you will go to Heaven."

The fellow smiled, and asked, "And the bad news?"

The old man replied, "They're expecting you this Thursday."

Three preachers sat discussing the best positions for prayer while a telephone repairman worked nearby. "Kneeling is definitely best," claimed one.

"No," another contended, "I get the best results standing with my hands outstretched to Heaven."

"You're both wrong," the third insisted, "the most effective prayer position is lying prostrate, face-down on the floor."

The repairman could contain himself no longer. "Hey, fellas," he interrupted, "The best prayin' I ever did was hangin' upside down from a telephone pole."

A vet received an emergency call at 3 a.m. from a farmer who needed help with his heifer's delivery of her calf. He hurried out into the frigid night and soon arrived at the farmer's barn. He was greeted by three exhausted men who had been unable to deliver the calf since the night before. Its head was all that was showing; its front legs were jammed behind it. The vet worked on the cow and was successful in his manipulations. The calf disappeared, then reappeared, and was coaxed to the floor. "Well I'll be, doc!" the owner announced delightedly. "So that's what they mean by being born again!"

Everybody is forecasting something these days - the economic future, what it will be like in the next century, tomorrow's weather. To put an end to all this speculation, we quote an ancient Chinese poet: "The plans are man's; the odds are God's."

A vicar was on holiday when his house was flooded. All his sermons were kept in the basement and the first question he asked his son over the phone was "Are my sermons all wet?"

"No, dad," came the reply, "they're as dry as ever."

The three sons of a lawyer, a doctor, and a minister respectively, were talking about how much money their fathers made. The lawyer's son said, "Dad goes into court on a case and often comes home with \$1500.

The doctor's son responded, "My father often earns \$2000 for a single operation.

The minister's son, determined not to be outdone, said "That's nothing. My father preaches for just 20 minutes on Sunday morning, and it takes 4 men to carry the money."

Three preachers enjoyed a chicken dinner on the farm of a parishioner. After the meal, the farmer took them for a tour of the farm. Seeing a rooster with his head lifted high, one minister remarked, "That fellow's pretty cocky, isn't he?"

The farmer's teenage son who had been following them around exclaimed, "You'd be cocky too if you'd just had three sons enter the ministry!"

Many people treat their religion as a spare tire; they never use it except in an emergency.

Teacher: Why did Jesus know the Scriptures so well?

Student: Oh, that's easy. His Daddy wrote them.

An itinerant musician was stranded in a village one Sunday morning, and as he was playing his cornet in the street, he was approached by the clergyman of the parish, who said, "Do you know the Fourth Commandment, my good man?"

"No," he replied, "but if you'll just whistle it over, I'll do my best."

During a Family Service, the Rector asked, "What is grey, has a bushy tail, and gathers nuts in the fall?"

One five year old raised her hand. "I know the answer should be Jesus," she began, "but it sounds like a squirrel to me."

A local pastor joined a community service club and the members thought they would have some fun with him. Under his name on the badge, they printed 'Hog Caller' as his occupation. Everyone made a big fanfare as the badge was presented. The pastor rose to the spirit of the jest, and responded, "I am usually called the 'Shepherd of the Sheep' ... but you know your people better than I do."

"There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness."

- Josh Billings

As Moses said to the multitude when he showed them the Ten Commandments, "You might say that they're non-negotiable demands."

Parishioner: "Father, you have a marvellous gift of oratory. How did you develop it?"

Rector: "I learned to speak as men learn to skate or ride a bike ... by doggedly making a fool of myself until I got used to it."

A bashful curate found the young ladies in the Parish too helpful. Eventually it became so embarrassing that he felt obliged to leave. Not long afterwards, he met the curate who had succeeded him. "Well," he asked, "how do you get on with the young ladies?"

“Oh, very well indeed,” said the other, “there is safety in numbers, you know.”
“Ah!” was the instant reply, “I only found it in Exodus.”

The minister announced that he would soon be starting a series of sermons based on the number 40. On successive Sundays the topics would be 40 Days, 40 nights, 40 weeks and 40 years. Halfway through the homily, a parishioner dozed off, and a man in the congregation quipped to his neighbour, “The 40 Series must have started early. This one is 40 Winks.”

A provincial church gathering was being held in Kitchener, Ontario, at the same time as the city was hosting a Lion’s Club conference. Two delegates from the church meeting were returning to their study area from a local restaurant when a car came racing into a nearby parking lot and squealed to a stop. “Hey! Are you guys Lions?” the driver asked.
“No,” came the reply, “we’re Christians.”

A minister noticed a crowd of urchins clustered around a dog of doubtful pedigree. “What are you doing, my little men?” he asked, with fatherly interest.
“Swappin’ lies, mister,” volunteered one of the boys. “The feller that tells the biggest one gets the pup.”
“That’s shocking!” exclaimed the minister. “Why, when I was your age, I never even thought of telling an untruth.”
“You win,” chorused the urchins. “The dog’s yours, mister.”

They have all sorts of new telephone services these days. Now they’ve got a dial-a-prayer service for atheists. You call the number and nobody answers.

The mothers of four priests got together and were discussing their sons. “My son is a Monsignor, said the first proud woman. When he enters a room, people say, ‘Hello, Monsignor.’”
The second mother went on, “My son is a Bishop. When he enters a room, people say, ‘Hello, Your Excellency.’”
“My son is a Cardinal,” continued the next one. “When he enters a room, people say, ‘Hello, your Eminence.’”
The fourth mother, whose son was the rector of a rural parish, though for a moment. “My son is six foot eleven inches and weighs 330 pounds,” she said with a smile. “When he enters a room, people say, ‘Oh, my God!’”

The worthy shepherd of the Mission Methodist church, in a burst of passionate eloquence in denunciation of the world’s wickedness, declared “Hell is full of cocktails, highballs, short skirts and one-piece bathing suits!
A voice in the congregation mumbled “Oh, Death, where is thy sting?”

An usher was passing the collection plate at a large church wedding. One of those attending looked up, very puzzled. Without waiting for the question, the usher nodded his head, "I know it's unusual; but the father of the bride requested it."

A famous writer once sent Christmas cards containing nothing but twenty-five letters of the alphabet. When some of his friends finally admitted that they had failed to understand his message, he pointed to the card and cried, "Look! No 'L'!"

Question: Why did Moses wander in the desert for 40 years?

Answer: Because, even then, men wouldn't stop and ask for directions.

An attorney died and went to heaven. As he approached the Pearly Gates, he noticed an orchestra playing and thousands of angels cheering. St. Peter himself rushed over to shake the lawyer's hand. "This is quite a reception," marvelled the new arrival.

"You're very special," St. Peter explained. "We've never had anyone live to be 130 before."

The attorney was puzzled. "But I'm only 65."

St. Peter thought for a moment. "Oh," he said, "we must have added up your billing hours."

"God has not always answered my prayers. If He had, I would have married the wrong man - several times."

-- Mrs Billy Graham.

A teenager loved using the saw and hammer, but never seemed to clean up afterwards. One day, his mother was in the garage, stepping over the sawdust, and her hand automatically reached for the broom and dustpan. Suddenly, her brain ordered her body to stand still and appraise the situation. Instead of leaving the work area clean, she propped the broom against the workbench with the following note attached: "As ye saw, so shall ye sweep! Love, Mom."

As singer Ethel Waters was getting ready to appear with a Billy Graham Crusade, she was asked if she had any worries about how it would go. "No," she replied firmly. "God doesn't sponsor flops."

Because of Sunday morning overflow, the rector of a small church was forced to hold two identical morning services. One Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the rector noticed a member arrive very late during the 9:30 service. Much to the surprise of the rector, the member was in his seat when the 11:00 service began. But as the congregation rose to sing the hymn before the sermon, he left, explaining to the usher, "This is where I came in."

Did you hear the one about the dentist who became a priest? People got mad at him because he wouldn't bless plaques.

“It is the test of a good religion whether you can joke about it.” - Gilbert K. Chesterton

Good advise infrequently taken: NO Thyself.

A Texas oilman died and went to heaven. After a few days, his bragging was getting on Saint Peter's nerves. No matter what part of paradise he was shown, the oilman claimed it failed to measure up to Texas. Finally Saint Peter took him to the edge of heaven so he could look straight into hell. “Have you got anything like that in Texas?” the saint demanded.

“No,” the oilman replied, “But I know some ol' boys down in Houston who can put it out.”

At a wedding reception, a man was asked to make the farewell toast to the newlyweds. When his eleven year old daughter heard, she said, “Oh, don't let him - he always burns it.”

Reverend Henry Ward Beecher entered Plymouth Church one Sunday and found several letters awaiting him. He opened one and found that it contained the single word, “Fool.” Quietly, and with becoming seriousness, he announced that fact to the congregation in these words: “I have known many an instance of a man writing a letter, and forgetting to sign his name, but this is the only instance I have ever known of a man signing his name and then forgetting to write the letter.”

A tax audit in early December revealed that a man who had claimed a refund of \$60 had in fact been entitled to \$90, but he had miscalculated the amount. Receiving an explanation and a cheque for the extra \$30 on Christmas Eve, the taxpayer promptly wrote back “Dear Sir, - I am now 70 years of age. At last I believe in Santa Claus.”

Two sailors were adrift on a raft in the ocean. They had just about given up hope of rescue. One began to pray, “O Lord, I've led a worthless life. I've been unkind to my wife, and I've neglected my children, but if you'll save us, I promise ...”

Suddenly, the other sailor yelled “Hold it! I think I see land!”

A preacher was invited for dinner at the home of one of his parishioners. Before his arrival the eight year old daughter of the hostess wanted to help set the table. “Okay,” said the mother hesitantly, “but do it right.”

That evening, when the preacher sat down to eat, he helped himself to everything on the table and then stared at his loaded plate. “Is there something wrong?” asked the hostess.

“Well, I don't seem to have a knife or fork,” he said.

“Why didn't you set a knife and fork at his place?” the mother asked her daughter.

“Mother, I didn't think he would need a knife or fork,” replied the little girl. “You told me he ate like a horse.”

A minister was addressing a Sunday school class. He had taken for his theme the familiar one of the children who mocked Elisha on his journey to Bethel - how the youngsters taunted the old prophet, and how they were punished when two she-bears came out of the wild and ate forty and two of them. "And now, children," said the pastor, wishing to discover if his talk had produced any moral effect, "what does this story show?"

"Please sir," came from a little girl well down in the front, "it shows how many children two she-bears can hold."

A minister had a live television program aimed at children in which he would relate several bible stories. On one program, he misjudged his time, and launched into a new story. "There once was a prophet named Elisha. One day as he walked along a path up a mountainside, he met some boys who threw stones at him."

At this point, he glanced up and saw the frantic floor director giving him the "cut" signal, followed immediately by the "10 seconds to end of show" signal. As the floor director counted off the remaining seconds, the minister calmly continued his story. "Elisha said to the boys 'If you keep on throwing stones at me, I'll set the bears on you and they'll eat you up.' And they did, and he did, and the bears did. "

A chaplain was passing through the prison garment factory. "Sewing?" he asked a prisoner who was at work.

"No, chaplain," replied the prisoner gloomily, "reaping!"

A distinguished clergyman and one of his parishioners were playing golf. It was a very close match, and at the last hole the clergyman teed up, addressed the ball and swung his driver with great force. The ball, instead of sailing down the middle of the fairway, merely rolled off the tee and slowly settled in a rut some four metres away. The clergyman glared at the ball and bit his lip, but said nothing. His opponent regarded him for a moment, and then remarked, "Doctor, that is the most profane silence I have ever witnessed."

An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him, "How do you ever expect to get into heaven?"

The boy thought it over and said, "Well, I'll just run in and out and in and out and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says 'For heaven's sake, Andrew, come in or stay out!'"

A new group of male applicants had just arrived in heaven. St. Peter looked them over and ordered, "All men who were henpecked on earth, please step to the left, all those who were bosses in their own homes, step to the right."

The line quickly formed on the left. Only one man stepped to the right. St. Peter looked at the frail little man standing by himself and inquired, "What makes you think you belong on that side?"

Without hesitation, the meek little man explained, "Because this is where my wife told me to stand."

A little boy wrote the day's memory verse on the blackboard:

“DO ONE TO OTHERS AS OTHERS DO ONE TO YOU.”

A Catholic priest and a rabbi, lifelong friends, were having dinner together. “Come on, rabbi,” said the priest, “when are you going to let yourself go and have a piece of ham?”

“At your wedding supper,” the rabbi replied.

A minister, substituting for a friend in a remote country parish, was greatly surprised on observing the old verger, who had been collecting the offertory, quietly remove a ten dollar bill before presenting the plate at the altar rail.

After the service, he called the old man into the vestry and told him with some emotion that his crime had been discovered. The old verger looked puzzled for a moment. Then a sudden light dawned on him. “Why sir, you don't mean that old bill of mine? I've led off with that for the last fifteen years!”

The minister's new secretary, a former worker with the Government Security Agency, was busily reorganizing her boss's filing system. She labelled one drawer “Sacred” and the other “Top Sacred”.

Instead of singing the Doxology phrase “Praise all creatures here below,” a little girl sang “Praise all preachers, here we go.” It made sense to her, because everybody sang it at the end of the service, just as they were leaving.

The Sunday school teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and suddenly turned into a pillar of salt. “My mother looked back once while she was driving,” contributed little Johnny, “and she turned into a telephone pole.”

The minister called on Mrs MacShoddie. “By the way,” he remarked after a while, “I was sorry to see your husband leave the church last Sunday right in the middle of my sermon. I trust nothing was seriously the matter with him?”

“Oh, no, Father,” replied Mrs MacShoddie. “It was nothing very serious; but you see, the poor man does have a terrible habit of walking in his sleep.”

Q: Where is medicine first mentioned in the bible?

A: Where the Lord gives Moses two tablets.

Q: In what place did the cock crow where all the world could hear him?

A: In Noah's Ark.

*“The true test of generosity is not how much you give,
but how much you have left afterwards.”*

The minister advertised for a man-servant and next morning a nicely dressed young man rang the bell. "Can you start the fire and have breakfast ready by seven o'clock," asked the minister.

"I guess so," answered the young man.

"Well, can you polish all the silver, wash the dishes and keep the house all neat and tidy?"

"Say, Reverend," said the young man, "I came here to see about getting married - but if it's going to be as much work as all that, you can count me out right now."

"If I die and go to hell, I want to go to the Russian section. That way I know the heating won't work."

- Yakov Smirnoff (noted for those Best Western Commercials)

Delivering a speech at a banquet on the night of his arrival in a large city, a visiting minister told several anecdotes that he expected to repeat at meetings the next day. Because he wanted to use the jokes again, he requested the reporters to omit them from any accounts they might turn in to their newspapers. A cub reporter, in commenting on the speech, ended his piece with the following: "The minister told a number of stories that cannot be published."

It was a wedding in a small country church in the middle of July on what was undoubtedly the hottest, most humid day of the year. The interior of the church was like an oven. The Rector promised that because it was so hot, he would keep his remarks very brief. Almost half an hour later, he continued rambling on. One muscular gentleman near the front, uncomfortable with the heat, loosened his tie, removed his jacket, and unfastened the buttons on his vest. As he removed his cuff links and prepared to roll up his shirt sleeves, the Rector spotted him, and somewhat shaken, quickly concluded his remarks and the service ended a few minutes later. As they were leaving, the lady who had been sitting in the pew behind the gentleman tapped him on the shoulder and said "Thank you very much. I don't think I could have taken that heat much longer. If you don't mind, if it's this hot, I think you just might use that trick again on Sunday!"

Pastor: "Isn't this a beautiful church? Here is a plaque for the men who died in the service."

His teenage brother: "Which one? ... Morning or evening?"

"What is a prime minister?"

"A prime minister is a preacher at his best."

Son: "Today is Father's Day. We should do something nice for him. Do you have any ideas?"

Daughter: "Well ... we might let him have his car for a change."

In a church where everybody sat towards the rear, a visitor walked in and took a seat in the front pew. After the service, the rector greeted him and asked why he had chosen that particular seat.

He answered, "I came to see how you succeed in getting people to move to the back - I'm a bus driver".

At the closing session of a church conference, the following prayer was heard: "O Lord, be with the first speaker and give him power to move thy people. Be with the second speaker and endue him with thy Spirit; and Lord, Lord have mercy on the last speaker".

A boy had just attended his first wedding. Asked how many husbands a woman may have, he replied "Sixteen..... four richer ... four poorer ... four better ... four worse."

A Scottish priest, on a visit to London, could not see eye to eye with a taxi driver on the question of fare. Finally he remarked, "Don't you try to tell me anything, my good man, I haven't been riding in taxis for five years for nothing."

"No", replied the driver, "but I bet you gave it a blarsted good try!"

A man lay on his death bed, his priest beside him to give him aid and comfort in his last few minutes on earth. "Do you wish to make a confession?" the priest asked the man.

"No." he replied.

"Well then," said the priest, "do you renounce the devil and all his works?"

"No." said the dying man.

"For Heaven's sake, why not?" demanded the priest.

"This is no time to be antagonizing anybody!" the man replied.

When a Sunday School class was asked to write out the Ten Commandments, one boy put down for the fifth: "Humour thy father and thy mother."

Two lawyers were bosom buddies. Much to the amazement of one, the other became a Sunday School teacher. "I bet you don't even know 'The Lord's Prayer'" the first one fumed.

"Everybody knows that," the other replied, "It's 'Now I lay me down to sleep ..'"

"You win," said the first one admiringly, "I didn't know you knew so much about the bible."

Some people use religion like a bus - they ride on it only when it is going their way.

Religious experience is meant to be bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions.

Minister at a special service: "I'm pleased to see such a dense crowd in here tonight."

Voice somewhere in the church: "Don't be too pleased. We ain't all dense."

“Mom, said Dad, “I’m going to find out what Jackie wants to be when he grows up. Watch.” He put a ten dollar bill on the table; it represented the banker. Next to it, he placed a brand new bible, representing the clergyman. And beside the bible, he placed a bottle of whisky, representing the bum. Mom and dad hid where they could see the articles on the table. Jackie, whistling happily, entered the room and spied the arrangement on the table. He looked around to see that he was alone. Satisfied, he picked up the bill and held it to the light, and replaced it. He fingered the pages of the new bible. He looked around once more. Then he quickly uncorked the bottle and smelled the contents. And, in a motion, he stuffed the bill in his pocket, lodged the bible under his arm, grabbed the bottle by the neck, and slid out of the room, still whistling. “My goodness, Mom,” Dad exclaimed, “He’s going to be a politician!”

Five year old Susie complained that she had a tummy ache. “That’s because your stomach is empty,” the mother replied, “you would feel better if you had something in it.”

That afternoon, the minister called, and in conversation, remarked that he had been suffering for a long time with a severe headache. Susie perked up. “That’s because it’s empty,” she said, “you’d feel better if you had something in it.”

St Peter’s greeting as you approach the Gates: “Well, halo there!”

Cleanliness is next to godliness, except in childhood, where it’s next to impossible.

A little girl, watching the baptism of her newborn brother, commented during the pouring of the water, “Be sure to wash behind his ears too!”

A minister came to the Anglican church of a nearby city to speak. “Do you wish to wear a surplice?” asked the Rector.

“Surplice! I am a Methodist. What do I know about surplices? All I know about is a deficit!”

In a Yarmouth, Nova Scotia church bulletin: At a meeting of the Cemetery Commission, the burial rates were increased slightly to reflect the higher cost of living.

“For Christmas,” a woman remarked to her friend, “I was visited by a jolly, bearded fellow with a big bag over his shoulder. My son came home from college with his laundry.”

A young man fortunate enough to come into a lot of money decided to buy a deluxe CB radio for his car. He went into a classy radio store and asked for their very best model. “I have just the thing”, the salesman said, and showed the young man a radio with all the latest features and more. “You’ll notice these three range buttons. If you press the first, you can talk to someone 180 kilometres away.”

“That’s Fantastic!” exclaimed the young man, “show me more!”

“If you press the second one,” continued the salesman, “your range increases to about 2500 kilometres.”

The young man was so impressed with these specifications that he told the salesman to have the radio installed, and paid the bill. While driving later, he tired of talking to people in the Ottawa-Carleton Region, and pressed the first button. In a few moments he was talking to a boater just west of Kingston. Later, he pressed the second button, and his first clear contact was with a businessman heading home on a Miami expressway. Now totally impressed with his new radio, he noticed and pressed the third range button. Smoke and sparks flew out in all directions. “My God!” he exclaimed.

A booming voice came out of the radio: “Speaking, good buddy! What’s on your mind?”

“Are mosquitos religious?”

“Yes. First they sing over you, and then they prey on you.”

Three men of the cloth, a Methodist, an Anglican, and a Catholic, were fishing in a boat about fifteen metres from land. “Time for lunch” said the Methodist as he stepped out of the boat and nonchalantly walked across the water to the shore. The Anglican duplicated the incredible feat. The Catholic confidently stepped out and found himself up to his neck in the water. One dry friend on the shore said to the other, “Do you think we should show him where the rocks are?”

At an annual ecumenical gathering, each of the ministers had a different part in the service. The minister in charge of the sermon had just celebrated his birthday and proudly displayed his new sash, a gift. He also mentioned that his gown had been a birthday gift a few years earlier. One of the other ministers gleefully pointed out to the congregation, “It’s not every day that you hear your sermon from a guy in his birthday suit.”

Saint Peter stopped a man at the entrance to heaven. “You’ve told too many lies to be allowed in here,” he said.

“Have a heart,” replied the man, “remember, you were once a fisherman yourself.”

Two priests, an Anglican and a Roman Catholic, had neighbouring churches, but they didn’t get along personally very well. After some time, they decided to forgive and forget past grievances; after all, they agreed, they were both doing the Lord’s work. “Let us therefore do His work to the best of our ability: you in your way,” concluded the Roman, and then added with a twinkle in his eye, “and I in His!”

A cleric visiting another Catholic priest offered to assist by hearing confession. Since he was a little deaf and people tend to whisper in the confessional, parishioners were asked for this occasion to write their sins on a little slip of paper and pass them over.

This worked quite well until one woman handed him a slip bearing the message “½ lb tea, ½ lb butter, 2 lb sugar, ¼ lb cheese.” When it was passed back, the absent minded woman reflected

bitterly on the list of sins she had left with the grocer.

The clergyman's eloquence may have been at fault, still he felt annoyed to find that an old gentleman fell asleep during the sermon on two consecutive Sundays. After the service on the second week, he told the boy who accompanied the sleeper that he wished to speak to him in the vestry. There he learned that the sleeper was the boy's grandfather. "Well," said the clergyman, "if you will only keep your grandfather awake during my sermon, I'll give you a nickel each week." The deal was made, and for the next two weeks, Grandfather stayed awake through the sermons, but on the third week, he slept soundly through. The vexed clergyman sent for the boy and said, "I am very angry with you. Your grandfather was asleep again today. Didn't I promise you a nickel a week to keep him awake?"

"Yes," replied the boy, "but Grandpa now gives me a dime not to disturb him."

Question: How did the fish that swallowed Jonah obey divine law?

Answer: Jonah was a stranger, and the fish took him in.

Mack: "Why do we say 'Amen' instead of 'Awomen'?"

Jack: "Because you sing hymns, not hers."

"What parable do you like best?" the Sunday School teacher asked her class.

One child replied, "The one about the multitude that loafs and fishes."

For years, Santa Claus had only eight reindeer. Several years ago, he acquired two more (a male and a female, donated by Gene Autry). One was Rudolph - who was the other one?

Her name was Olive. (♪ "Olive, the other reindeer, used to laugh and call him names"... ♪)

A social climbing lady found herself seated at a big public dinner between a noted bishop and an equally famous rabbi. "I feel as if I were a leaf between the Old and the New Testaments," she announced coyly - interrupting the bishop just as he was about to make a telling point.

The bishop, distinctly annoyed, eyed her coldly and remarked, "That page, madam, is usually blank."

A woman bought a last minute box of 100 identical greeting cards, and not even pausing to read the message, she feverishly dispatched them to the 99 relatives and acquaintances whose cards were displayed on her piano and mantle.

Some days later, she happened to pick up the one card not mailed, and was shocked to read "This little card is just to say, 'A gift you'll love is on its way.'"

A visiting pastor knocked on a door several times but got no answer. Through the curtains, he could

see that the TV was on, so he took one of his name cards, wrote "Revelation 3: 20" on it, and left it on the door knocker. (Revelation 3:20 in part: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone will open, I will come in.")

The following Sunday, as the parishioners were leaving, a lady handed him a card with her name and "Genesis 3: 10" written on it: "I heard thy voice and I was naked so I hid myself..."

A vain clergyman asked an old man how he had enjoyed his sermon. "I liked one passage at the end very much," said the old man.

"Which was that?" asked the clergyman.

"The one from the pulpit to the vestry," replied the old man.

The evening lesson was from the Book of Job and the minister had just read, "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out," when immediately the church was plunged into total darkness.

"Brethren," said the minister with scarcely a moment's pause, "in view of the sudden and startling fulfilment of this prophecy, we will spend a few minutes in silent prayer for the electric lighting company."

It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself.

Charles Dickens

A motorist was picked up unconscious after an accident, and was being carried to a nearby filling station. Upon opening his eyes en route, he began to kick and struggle desperately to get away. Afterwards, he explained that the first thing he saw was a "Shell" sign but somebody was standing in front of the "S"!

A village pastor, who had a weakness for trout, preached against fishing on Sunday. The next day one of his members presented him with a fine string of fish and said, hesitatingly, "I guess I ought to tell you, Father, that those trout were caught on Sunday." The minister gazed appreciatively at the speckled trout, and said piously, "The fish aren't to blame for that."

Children's versions of the Lord's Prayer:

- ▶ Our Father, who are in heaven, hello! What be Thy name?
- ▶ Give us this day our daily breath ...
- ▶ Our Father, who art in heaven, Hollywood be Thy name ..
- ▶ Our Father, who art in heaven, Harold be Thy name
- ▶ Give us this day our jelly bread
- ▶ Lead us not into creation
- ▶ Deliver us from weevils
- ▶ Deliver us from eagles

Father: What did you learn in Sunday School this morning?

Son: We learned about how Moses went behind enemy lines to rescue the Jews from the Egyptians. Moses ordered the engineers to build a pontoon bridge. After the people crossed, he sent bombers back to blow up the bridge and the Egyptian tanks that were chasing them. And then ...

Father: Did your teacher really tell it like that?

Son: No, but if I told you what he really said, you would never believe it!

A collector of rare books ran into an acquaintance of his who had just thrown away an old bible that had been in his family for generations. He happened to mention that Guten something had printed it. "The name wasn't Gutenberg?" gasped the book collector.

"Yes, that was the name."

"You idiot! You've thrown away one of the first books ever printed! A copy recently sold at an auction for four hundred thousand dollars."

"Aww, mine wouldn't have been worth a dime," replied the man, "because some clown by the name of Martin Luther had scribbled all over it."

"Does your husband attend church regularly?"

"Oh, yes. He hasn't missed an Easter Sunday since we were married."

The Rector received a call from an investigator for Revenue Canada, who was checking the tax return of a member of the church. "We notice that he has listed a donation to your building fund of three hundred dollars. Is that correct?"

The minister answered, without hesitation, "I haven't got my records available, but I'll promise you one thing: if he hasn't, he will!"

Little Mary, the daughter of a local radio announcer, was invited to a friend's house for dinner. The hostess asked if Mary would honour them by saying grace. Delighted, the little girl cleared her throat, looked at her wrist watch, and said, "This food, friends, is coming to you through the courtesy of Almighty God!"

Billy watched his new baby sister in the crib as she screamed and kicked. He finally asked where she came from. "Heaven" was his mother's reply. "No Wonder they let her go," Billy responded.

The Rector said to the mother whose young son had just been Christened, "You know, Mrs Jones, I have never seen a child that has behaved so well at a Christening!"

Mrs Jones replied, "Well, you see, it's because my husband and I have been practising on him with a watering can for a whole week!"

Teacher: Where was Solomon's temple?

Student: On the side of his head.

“There will be thunder, lightening, floods, fires and earthquakes!” roared the preacher, describing Judgement Day. Wide-eyed, a little boy in the congregation tugged at his mother’s sleeve: “Mom, will I get out of school?”

Baseball is frequently referred to in the Bible: In the big inning, Eve stole first - Adam stole second - Gideon rattled the pitchers - Goliath was put out by David - and the Prodigal Son made a home run!

“There is dew in one flower and not in another, because one opens its cup and takes it in, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off. God rains His goodness and mercy as widespread as the dew, and if we lack them, it is because we will not open our hearts to receive them.”

Henry Ward Beecher

Two men fishing on Sunday morning were feeling pretty guilty, especially since the fish didn’t bite. One said to the other, “I guess I should have stayed home and gone to church.”

The other angler replied lazily, “I couldn’t have gone to church anyway ... my wife’s sick in bed.”

In a parish far from here, a minister not wholly popular with his congregation announced that he was leaving for another parish. He said “The One who sent me to you, is calling me elsewhere.” The congregation rose for the last hymn, singing “What a friend we have in Jesus!”

The Rector was invited over for dinner and asked to lead in prayer for the meal. After the brief prayer, Junior said approvingly, “You don’t pray so long when you’re hungry, do you?”

One priest to another, across the card table: “Forgive me, father, for I have Ginned.”

The Sunday School teacher asked, “What must we do before we can receive forgiveness of sins?” A student answered, “We must sin.”

A young mother was trying to comfort her daughter when her pet kitten died, telling her that Fluffy was up in heaven with God. “But mommy,” the girl sobbed, “what would God want with a dead cat?”

A country parson decided to buy himself a horse. The dealer assured him that the one that he had selected was a perfect choice. “This here horse”, he said, “has lived all his life in a religious atmosphere. So remember that he’ll never start if you yell ‘Giddyap’. You’ve got to say ‘Praise the Lord.’ Likewise, a ‘Whoa’ will never make him stop. you’ve got to say ‘Amen’.”

Thus forewarned, the parson paid for the horse, mounted him, and with a cheery ‘Praise the Lord’, sent him trotting off in the direction of the parson’s parish. Suddenly, however, he noticed that the road ahead had been washed out, leaving a chasm two hundred metres deep. In a panic, he forgot his instructions and cried ‘Whoa’ in vain several times. The horse just cantered on. At the very last

moment, the parson remembered and cried 'Amen', and the horse stopped short at the very brink of the chasm. Alas, that's when the parson, out of force of habit, murmured fervently, "Praise the Lord!"

Bishop Doane of Albany, one time rector of an Episcopal church in Hartford, loved to relate how Samuel Clemens (better known as author Mark Twain), who occasionally attended his services, played a joke on him one Sunday.

"Dr. Doane," Clemens said at the end of the service, "I enjoyed your service this morning. I welcomed it like an old friend. I have, you know, a book at home containing every word of it."

"You have not," challenged Dr Doane.

"I have so", countered the author.

"Well, send that book to me. I'd like to see it."

"I'll send it" the humourist replied.

Next morning he sent an unabridged dictionary to the rector.

Two elderly women were sitting on the porch while one's grandson played at their feet. The ladies got to discussing the state of the world. "My," said one, "there's sin everywhere you turn today. Remember when we were young, Martha, and our parents told us that God kept track of all our sins. How can he possibly do that today when there is so much sin everywhere?"

The little boy looked up, shook his head, and said, "Grandma, don't you know that God has computers?"

"Mommy," said little Judy, "did you ever see a cross-eyed bear?"

"Why no, dear," chuckled her mother, "why do you ask?"

"Well, in Sunday school this morning, we sang about 'the consecrated cross-eyed bear'."

A minister preached an unusually short sermon, explaining that his dog got into his office and chewed up some of his notes early that morning. At the close of the service, a parish visitor commented "If your dog ever has pups, please let my pastor have one of them."

Did you hear about the young pastor who fouled up the established routine? He didn't stand at the door and shake hands with the worshippers after the service. Instead, he went out to the curb and shook hands with the red-faced parents waiting for their children to come out of Sunday school.

A retired minister was called upon to substitute for the rector, who was unable to reach the church because his route had been blocked by the previous night's snowstorm.

The speaker began by explaining the meaning of a substitute. "If you break a window," he said, "and place a piece of cardboard there instead, that is a substitute."

After the sermon, a woman who had been listening intently shook hands with him, and wishing to compliment him, said "You were no substitute ... you were a real pane!"

A Mormon acquaintance once pushed Mark Twain into an argument on the issue of polygamy. After long and tedious expositions justifying the practice, the Mormon demanded Twain cite any passage of scripture expressly forbidding polygamy. Twain replied, "No man can serve two masters."

"Snow storms are God's way of saying, "You've been working too hard."

-- Kathy Matthews, Author ("Take a Letter To Yourself!")

A new preacher had just begun his sermon. He was a little nervous, and about ten minutes into the talk, his mind went totally blank. He remembered what they had taught him in seminary to do when a situation like this would arise - repeat your last point. Often this helps you remember what is coming next. He decided to give it a try.

"Behold, I come quickly" Still nothing. He tried it yet again, this time with such force that he lost his balance and fell forward, knocking the pulpit to one side, tripping over a flower pot, and finally coming to rest in the lap of a little old lady in the front row.

The young preacher apologized profusely, and tried to explain what happened.

"That's all right, young man," said the lady, "It was my fault. I should have gotten out of the way. You warned me three times that you were coming!"

Did you hear about the missionary that the cannibals couldn't boil? He was a friar.

As Noah remarked while the animals were boarding the Ark, "Now I herd everything."

- Fred Allen

One of the Sunday School teachers had produced the Christmas play. Just as the performance was about to begin, she reminded her students that if they forgot their lines, they should ad-lib instead of just standing there. All went well until the three Wise Men made their entrance:

"Baby Jesus, here is your gold," said the first.

"Baby Jesus, here is your frankincense," offered the second.

The third student forgot the name of his gift and froze, inwardly terrified, until suddenly he remembered the teacher's advice - just say anything. The boy peered into the manger and exclaimed, "Ooh, doesn't he look just like his dad!"

A lady was willed an expensive fur coat by a relative, and she wore it proudly to church. While there, one man asked her, "And what unfortunate creature had to die in order for you to wear that coat?"

Glaring at him, she responded, "My aunt."

A perfect example of the power of prayer is when a blizzard closes the schools on the day of a big exam.

After the new rector had accepted a call to serve in a rural parish, it was determined that the local water supply and his digestive tract just wouldn't agree unless a water softener and a charcoal filter were installed in the rectory water system. The governing body of the parish voted to install the units.

When reading the minutes at the following meeting, the secretary, with tongue in cheek, reported the action thus: "Moved, seconded, and carried that the trustees of the congregation take care of the rector's drinking problem."

A distinguished minister and two elders from his congregation attended an out-of-town meeting that did not finish until rather late. They decided to have something to eat before going home, but unfortunately, the only place open was a seedy bar and grill with a questionable reputation. After being served, one of the elders asked the minister to say grace. "I'd rather not," the clergyman said, "I don't want Him to know I'm here."

A man approached the Gate of Heaven and asked to be admitted. "Tell me of one good thing you did in your life," challenged St. Peter.
"Well," replies the man, "I saw a group of punks harassing an elderly woman, so I kicked their leader in the shins."
"When did this happen?"
"About forty seconds ago!"

The small Parish was not a wealthy one; the priest was dependent on parishioners for upkeep and maintenance of the church. Once, he asked Sam, the local electrician to rewire the lighting. The only way to reach the wiring was to enter the attic above the altar and crawl over the ceiling by balancing on the rafters. Concerned for his safety, Sam's wife waited in a pew. Unbeknown to her, some parishioners had entered and were congregating quietly in the vestibule. They paid no attention to the woman, probably assuming that she was praying. Worried about her husband, she looked up toward the ceiling and yelled, "Sam, Sam - are you up there? Did you make it okay?"
There was quite an outburst from the vestibule when Sam's hearty voice echoed down, "Yes, dear, I made it up here just fine!"

Shelly, a talent scout for a large recording studio, was walking past a convent when he heard someone singing in a voice so beautiful that he couldn't believe his ears. He rang the bell and asked to speak to the woman with the amazing voice. Soon a young nun appeared. "Sister," said Shelly, "I represent Euphonics Records and I'd like you to make a tape of hymns. Your fee could be donated to charity."
"I'd be delighted," she replied, "but first I must get written permission from Mother Superior."
"Okay, Sister, here's my card." Shelly rushed back to his office and described his find to his boss. Then he asked for a raise. The boss replied, "Wait 'til the nun signs, Shelly."

One senior citizen to another: "If God believed in today's permissiveness, He would have given us the Ten Suggestions!"

A three year old, who loved to visit the zoo, recently served as ring bearer at his aunt's wedding. He Grr'ed and growled all the way down the isle and during much of the ceremony. When his mother asked him why he had done this, he replied, rather indignantly, "Because I was the ring bear."

The Student Intern stepped into the pulpit to deliver his first sermon with all the apprehension of a young man recently graduated from divinity school. He hesitated a moment. Then his face broke into a wide grin as he shared with the congregation the message that someone had left near his notes. "Give 'em Heaven!" it said.

There was a church that was noted for its fine choir. One Sunday, just before the service began, the choir leader whispered to the minister that the tenor soloist was sick, and the choir would have to sing an anthem different from the one printed in their Bulletin. The minister was asked to explain the change to the congregation. This he was happy to do ... until he heard himself say "Owing to the illness of the tenor, the choir will sing Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy.'"

A large church had recently installed an amplifier/speaker system which their minister put to good use. One Sunday, a woman arrived somewhat late for the service with a baby in her arms and a little boy in a cowboy suit in tow. As they sat down, the little boy began yelling and shooting off his cap gun. The minister tolerated this for a few seconds, and then picked up the microphone. "Little boy," he said, his voice booming throughout the church, "Do not shoot your gun in the church. It is a place of peace, and guns are not allowed." The boy shrank back and huddled close to his mother, remaining quiet until the collection plate was passed around. When it reached him, he looked at it for a moment, and then slowly and solemnly laid his guns on the plate.

The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings. -- Eric Hoffer

The Sunday School teacher, trying to impress the students with the joyous exultation of shouting Hallelujah, said, "What word do church members shout with joy?"

"Bingo!" replied one youngster.

Love is an act of faith, and whoever is of little faith is also of little love. -- Erich Fromm

One day, the pastor of the church approached the chairperson of the financial committee and said, "I have some good news and some bad news. Which would you like to hear first?"

When she requested the good, he replied, "Our church has acquired a new baseball."

"Well, to what do we owe this great honour?" she asked.

"That's the bad news," he replied sadly, "It came through the window."

A real estate agent spent six months showing homes to a young couple, and at last found two that they liked enough to buy. They viewed both houses several times trying to decide between them.

Finally, after a long tour of one house, they advised the agent that they would purchase the other house.

Out of curiosity, the agent asked how they had reached their decision. "I was standing in the family room," the young woman explained, "and I asked God to give me a sign. Right then and there, a plane came zooming over on its flight path to the airport, and I knew this wasn't the house for us."

There was a lady who writes more cheques in April than in any other month. The government gets theirs, her insurance policies all come due, and her church holds its annual fund drive. So when the Parish priest called regarding her donation, she was quick to jump to the wrong conclusion. The priest began by saying, "I was wondering if you'd like to reconsider the size of your gift?"

"Father," she interrupted, "we'd like to be more generous, but you couldn't ask at a worse time."

"I know," the priest continued, "your cheque bounced."

The Presbyterians were convening in Scotland. After a couple of days of sitting on hard pews, a group decided to stretch their legs in the countryside. Soon they approached a rickety old bridge over a river, but were so busy talking that they missed a "Keep Off The Bridge" sign.

A villager saw them step onto the dangerous span and yelled for them to stop. "That's all right," one of them answered, "we're here from the Presbyterian convention."

"I dinna care aboot that," came the reply, "but if ye go much further, ye'll all be Baptists!"

A minister explained his part time job as a judo instructor: "I teach you what to do after you've turned both cheeks."

"I am like a little pencil in God's hand. He does the writing. The pencil has nothing to do with it." -- Mother Teresa

An elderly woman was celebrating her birthday one Sunday morning, and many members of the congregation of her church were extending their best wishes. "How old are you?" one woman asked.

"Can you keep a secret?" responded the elderly woman.

"Certainly."

"So can I!" she gloated.

Plan ahead - it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

True stories are often the best. When he was on a tour in London with his parents and brother, 13 year old David Pattillo went through Westminster Abbey. In the Abbey there is a notice, posted on a box, stating that a million people visit the ancient citadel of worship every year and a contribution of 10 pence (25¢) is needed from each visitor to keep it in good repair.

David became worried when he noticed that out of the tour party of thirty only his father put anything in the box - a dollar. On the way back to the bus David borrowed \$6.50 from his father and ran back and dropped it into the box so that all on the tour would be represented.

On the last night the tour director asked the travellers what had meant the most to them on the trip and what had been the most disappointing. With all the eagerness of a 13 year old, David told of his concern about Westminster Abbey. Some members remembered guiltily that they had paid \$50 a head to attend a nightclub but had not given 25¢ to one of the world's most historic shrines.

During the night, a dozen envelopes were slipped under David's door. The next morning he excitedly told his father, and they rushed to the Abbey. The guardian of the door opened the envelopes and found they contained more than \$100.

Many years ago, the Reader's Digest told the story of a couple who came to the rectory to visit their minister. As they walked up the steps to the rectory, they overheard the minister and his wife engaging in a slightly heated discussion over the high cost of living. Answering their interrupting knock, the usually shy wife commented, "He can't see why I can't feed the multitude with two fishes and two loaves of bread."

At Dublin's Trinity College, Sunday chapel attendance was compulsory for Anglicans. One young rebel tried to exempt himself by claiming on his application that he was a sun worshipper. Early on his first Sunday, the student was awakened by persistent knocking. Bleary-eyed, he opened his door to the college porter, who said respectfully, "The dean's compliments, sir. The sun will be up in five minutes, and he expects you in the Front Square to see it rising."

Notice posted outside a North London church: 'Wanted - Workers for God. Plenty of overtime.

Did you hear about the preacher who made a long distance phone call to another preacher? It was a parson-to-parson call.

There was a preacher who was also an author. One day he telephoned a big movie studio in Hollywood and offered to sell a scenario entitled "Pilate's Wife". "No sale", the Hollywood mongul replied, "we've had too many aeroplane pictures already."

A Sunday School teacher asked a little boy if he knew where God's home was, confidently expecting that the child's answer would be "In Heaven". To her surprise, the child replied "In the bathroom at my house."

"Why do you say that?" enquired the shocked teacher.

"Because every morning my daddy pounds on the door and says 'My Lord, are you **still** in there?'"

A mother asked her child about the meticulously wrapped box that he brought from Sunday School. "Does the package contain anything breakable?" she queried?

The boy held the box carefully as he replied, "Only the Ten Commandments."

When the Church Editor of a certain newspaper took a well earned vacation, the publisher appointed his Farm Editor to fill in for her. "Great!" exclaimed the Farm Editor, "Now I have a new title. I am Editor of Heaven and Earth.

"Now how many of you would like to go to Heaven?" asked the Sunday School teacher. All of the eager four year olds raised their hands, except Tommy.

"I'm sorry, I can't", Tommy said with a sob, "my mother told me to come right home after Sunday School."

Little Johnny's parents were listening at his door one night while he said his prayers. He had just finished praying "God bless Mom ... God bless Dad ... God bless Grandma", and normally would have hopped into bed. This particular night, he stayed on his knees a moment longer. Finally, he looked up and said earnestly, "Please take care of yourself God, because if anything happened to you, we're all sunk."

"I understand," said a young woman to another, "that at your church, you have a very small congregation. Is that so?"

"Yes," answered the other girl, "in fact, our congregation is so small that every time our rector says 'Dearly Beloved' you feel as if you have received a proposal!"

One grade one student to another at recess: "My mum says her prayers every night - she always says 'THANK GOD' as soon as I've gone to bed."

Newspapers, and even their little brother, the church bulletin, occasionally contain grammatical errors that send an unintended message to the reader. For example, the Citizen once reported that "The bride wore a long white dress which fell to the floor..."; and a church bulletin contained this gem: "For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery down stairs."

One day Pope John XXIII visited the Hospital of the Holy Spirit in Rome, which is administered by a religious sisterhood. Deeply moved by the papal visitation, the Mother Superior went up to him to introduce herself. "Most Holy Father, I am the Superior of the Holy Spirit," she said.

"Well, I must say you're very lucky," replied the Pope. "I'm only the vicar of Christ."

A minister was anxious to get home to his family after several days absence. He was travelling just over the speed limit when he was pulled over by a police officer. "A minister, eh? How would you like me to preach you a little sermon?"

"Skip the sermon," the minister replied, "just take up the collection."

Once when English actor Alec McCowen gave a dramatic reading of St. Mark's Gospel before 400 bishops, he remarked, "This is the first time in history where one actor had 400 prompters."

A man was talking to the rector following the service, and explained that this was the first service in years that he had heard clearly, thanks to his brand new hearing aid. "It seems like I can hear a leaf drop a block away," he boaster, "a drop of water is like an explosion. I can hear people walking on the carpets in the apartment next door. I think it's the greatest hearing aid in the world."

"What kind is it?" asked the rector.

"Almost twelve thirty" he replied.

A priest felt that there was a lack of friendliness among members of the congregation and that people were reluctant to greet one another in church. During the service the next Sunday, the priest described the situation and said that on the following Sunday, they would introduce the "Peace" to the service. He explained that this would provide a brief pause in which parishioners could turn to those seated behind them and say a friendly hello. Following the service, one man turned to the woman behind him and said, "Good morning".

She looked at him indignantly. "That doesn't start until *next* Sunday!" she snapped.

A youth group decided to raise money by holding a car wash. However, on the morning that the carwash was to be held, it was pouring rain. The minister saved the day by posting this sign: GOD'S COOPERATIVE CAR WASH. WE WASH - HE RINSES. The venture was a great success.

If it weren't for the last minute, a lot of things would never get done. -- The Presbyterian Outlook

A congregation had just moved into a brand new church, and they sold their old building to another congregation in a town a few miles away. As the old building was being moved on a mammoth trailer to its new location, it snagged a power line and the roof caught fire. The driver ran to a nearby farmhouse and called the fire department in a town a kilometre up the road and reported the fire. "I'm sorry," replied the dispatcher, "but our jurisdiction ends at the town line."

"Well," said the driver, "you better get your equipment ready and out to the town line, because the fire will be in your jurisdiction in five minutes!"

Janet Langhart, former co-host of Boston's "Good Morning!" television show on WCVB, told about the time she attended Easter morning Mass at the Mission Church in Roxbury, Mass. After the service, she fell into conversation with one of the Mission priests. "You know, Father," she said, "I'm not Catholic. I'm Baptist."

"Well, look at it this way," he replied, "you just work for another network."

A clergyman, leaving to take up his duties in a new parish, was being praised by the members of his congregation. One woman told him, "You're wonderful! I never knew what sin was till you came

here.”

The new preacher in a southern town looked exactly like Louis Armstrong. Everywhere he went, people kept looking at him and asking for autographs. “No, no, no!”, he kept answering, “I’m the Reverend Elias Jones, the new pastor.”

One day the pastor went up to a house and knocked on the door. A woman answered and said, “Why, as I live and breathe, it’s Louis Armstrong visiting our little town!”

“No, no, no!” replied the pastor in his customary fashion, “I’m the Reverend Elias Jones just trying to meet the people in my community. I’d like to help everyone out with their problems.”

“Well,” said the woman, “maybe you could help us out with a problem we’ve got. Our 21 year old daughter is up in her room and she’s just crazy about men.”

“I’ll do the best I can,” answered the pastor.” He went upstairs and knocked on the daughter’s door. Out came a gorgeous young woman. She took one look and squealed, “Louis Armstrong!” and threw herself into his arms.

And the Reverend replied, “Well, hellooo, Dolly!”

Parenthood is the art of bringing up children without putting them down. -- Franklin P. Jones in the Wall Street Journal

In my quest for items for Heavenly Humour, I often find stories that are hilarious, but unfortunately, I can’t use them because they have nothing to do with church or family life. This story was given to me by a person who “attends church religiously”, and for a pun this good, that’s close enough!

The average bee-keeper is a serious minded individual. But one practical joker built a dummy hive, with the entrance only painted on. Bee after bee would ram its head against the hive and fall stunned. One lone bee, wiser than the rest, did not fall for this trick. She stood aside, shaking her head at the goings-on. “Why are you shaking your head, wise one?” a young bee asked.

“I was just thinking”, replied the elder, “what bees these mortals fool.”

Pope Pius X’s mother was one of the few mothers of popes who lived to witness the ultimate consecration. On the day it happened, the new pope’s mother was up front, dressed in black. Toward the end of the long ceremony, Pius X walked up to his mother, held out his hand, and murmured, “I would like you to be the first to kiss the ring of the fisherman.”

She kissed it. Then she held out her hand with its worn wedding ring. “Now, Joseph,” she said, “you kiss this one. If it wasn’t for this one, you wouldn’t have that one.”

A three year old was visiting Grandma and Grandpa, and they took her to a christening, which interested her greatly. A few days later, they took her to a wedding and sat the little girl at the end of the pew so that she could see everything. As the bride came down the aisle, a small voice was clearly heard demanding indignantly: “Where’s the baby?”

The science professor at a small mid-western college scarcely bothered to conceal the fact that he

was agnostic, if not an atheist. “Unless you shake off old-fashioned views and act for yourself,” he kept telling his classes, “the world will leave you behind. Putting your faith in God may be all right, but you can’t stop there. Take rain making. When the farmers simply got down on their knees and prayed for rain, what did they get? The Dust Bowl. Now, all they do is send up a plane, drop some chemicals on a cloud, and it rains. No question about that, is there?”

To the professor’s surprise, the drawling voice of a farm boy was heard. “Sure there’s a question,” he said. “Who supplied the cloud?”

A young woman who played the harp spent a lot of time lugging the cumbersome instrument from place to place. After one performance, she carried the harp into an elevator of a nearby parking garage. On the way up, the elevator stopped and a man started to get on. But noticing the unusual cargo, he hesitated. Then, with a smile, he said “I don’t know if I want to get on with you or not. Just how far up are you going?”

A priest watched while a mechanic removed engine parts from his car to get at the valves. He struck up a conversation with the gentleman next to him who was also watching, and eventually learned that the man was a surgeon. “You know, doctor,” said the priest, “I sometimes believe that this type of work is as complicated as the work you do.”

“Perhaps,” the surgeon replied, “but let’s see him do it with the engine running.”

Found in the minutes of a church organization: The motion carried with four voting for and one obstinacy.”

Sign posted in front of a church: “All new sermons - No summer reruns”.

The professor of a seminary class spent 45 minutes labouring over a particular point, trying to make it clear. Suddenly, a student in the front row slammed his notebook shut, jumped up and rushed out the door. The professor looked up in time to see the door close. Then he turned to his class and said, “I guess he’s going out to preach it while it’s still fresh.”

When asked his opinion of heaven, an astronomy professor answered, “After spending my life pondering the mysteries of existence and the universe, I hope that heaven will be a place where I can say, ‘Okay, I give up. What was the answer?’”

Marriage is that relationship between man and woman in which the independence is equal, the dependence is mutual, and the obligation is reciprocal. -- L.K. Anspacher

A famous English architect was frequently engaged to inspect churches to determine their condition. One day, he was using binoculars to examine the stonework of an old clock tower in London’s Bethnal Green when a woman paused to watch him. After a moment, she said helpfully, “It’s nearly

eleven o'clock, love.”

After hearing himself introduced over-flatteringly, Archbishop Lord Coggan said he would like to offer two prayers for forgiveness: one for the man who introduced him, for telling so many lies - and the other for himself, for enjoying it so much.

An elderly gent of 93 had only the most basic needs and very few wants. His daughter-in-law, hoping to get a little help in choosing a suitable birthday gift for him, asked, “Pa, what would you like for your birthday this year?”

“Nothing” he replied.

“But Pa,” she kidded, “that’s what we gave you last year.”

“Yep,” he answered, “and I’m still using it.”

An old people’s home in England gets a visit every Thursday from the vicar and a chiropodist. It’s called soul-and-heel day.

The people who don’t believe in hell have never tried to get bubble gum out of a mohair sweater.

A man trying to phone long distance one Sunday was stymied by busy circuits. “It’s Mother’s Day, you know,” the operator explained, and then added reflectively, “Everybody is trying to call Mother - and they all seem to be calling collect.”

At the conclusion of a Mother’s Day sermon about honouring mothers all year, the congregation rose and sang, “This Is My Father’s World.”

A woman was talking about the small attendance at church. “It gets so bad on Sunday morning,” she said, “that when the minister says ‘Dearly Beloved,’ it makes me blush.”

The departure / check-in area of a local airport is kept pleasantly quiet, and even the Salvation Army volunteer found that her familiar bells weren’t allowed. As a result, she attracted little attention during her first day’s duty. The following day, her business was brisk as she waved two signs in the air. One read “DING” and the other “DONG”.

In a church bulletin: “We need some volunteers to act as mother’s helpers in the church nursery each Sunday. Please contact Connie B. if you can work in the nutsery.”

A sign in the office of a workaholic: “Thank God it’s Monday.”

An especially verbal and boisterous child was being hurried out of a Kentucky church, slung under his irate father's arm. No one in the congregation so much as raised an eyebrow - until the child captured everyone's attention by crying out in a charming southern accent, "Y'all pray for me now!"

When the parishioners entered the church one Sunday morning they were confronted by a rope blocking off thirteen rear pews. A sign attached read: "NOTICE: We are giving up these back pews for Lent. For the Lord's sake, please sit up front."

"What parable do you like best?" the Sunday School teacher asked her class. One child replied, "The one about the multitude that loafs and fishes."

One Sunday in an Irish village, three Protestant women visited a Roman Catholic church. Recognizing them and wishing to show respect, the priest whispered to his server, "Three chairs for the Protestant ladies."

The server jumped to his feet and shouted, "Three cheers for the Protestant ladies!" The congregation rose, responded heartily, and the service continued.

When a child gets a drum for Christmas, the first thing he learns is that he's never going to get another one.

Frederick Temple was Archbishop of Canterbury in the late 19th century. He was a humane, liberal and sensible man. It is said that he once remarked: "In making a sermon, think up a good beginning; then think up a good ending; then bring these two as close together as you can."

Christmas is a joyous day for children. For parents, peace on earth comes several days later when all the batteries wear out.

The three stages of man: he believes in Santa Claus, he doesn't believe in Santa Claus, he is Santa Claus.

Miracle drugs go way back. Moses had two tablets that could cure the world's ills.

One wedding guest to another: "It's a marriage of convenience. She owns a big luxury car and he owns a gas station."

The teachers in a Sunday School took turns giving the lesson. Usually, they'd round it off with

“Now, children, the moral of this story is ...”.

One day, Miss Brown, the teacher whose turn it was, made the story particularly exciting, and the youngsters were delighted. One boy asked if Miss Brown might not give the lesson more often. “We like her very much”, he explained, “because she hasn’t any morals.”

A resort used by a large Christian denomination for its church conferences has as its motto: “There are no problems, only opportunities.” When a male guest presented himself at the hotel desk and stated that he had a problem, the desk clerk responded with a smile, “Sir, here we do not have problems, only opportunities.”

“Call it what you like,” said the guest, “but there is a woman in my room.”

When the vicar of a parish in the East End of Victorian London had insufficient funds to provide his flock with hymn books, patent-medicine manufacturer Thomas Beecham (grandfather of the conductor) promptly offered to supply them. Aware of Beecham’s promotional skills, the vicar was grateful, but cautious. What did Beecham want in return? Would every page carry a large advertisement for pills. Beecham assured him it would not.

Only at the carol service at Christmas did the vicar realize how he had been outwitted. He was mortified as he heard his congregation singing:

Hark the herald angels sing
Beecham’s pills are just the thing
For blessed peace, and mercy mild -
Two for mother, one for child!

One of former US Senator Sam Ervin’s favourite stories was that of a preacher back home who was inclined to use big words even though he was not always sure of their meaning. One Sunday morning, he instructed a visiting clergymen who was about to deliver the sermon: “Speak loudly and clearly, ‘cause the agnostics in here are terrible.”

An usher at a wedding greeted an elderly woman as she entered the church. He offered his arm and asked, “Are you a friend of the bride?”

“Oh, heavens, no,” she whispered, “I’m the mother of the groom.”

It wasn’t intentional, the minister assured the congregation. But once, in the mid 1970's at Robinson Memorial United Church in London Ontario, the sermon, “Sleeping In on Sunday Morning” was followed by the hymn, “Rise Up, O Men of God”.

The Sunday School class had drawn names for a Valentine party at which each boy was to bring a box of candy to share with a girl as part of the refreshments.

“I wanted Sue’s name,” Mike complained to his mother, “but Bill got it.”

“Oh, don’t worry about that,” his mother said. “Surely Sue isn’t the only pretty girl in your class.”

“Course not”, he said disgustedly, “but she’s the only one who can’t eat candy.”

One minister commented to another that when he looks at the collection plate, he deduces that some members of his congregation think churches are coin operated.

On a visit to San Francisco, a couple dined with friends at the Wine Cellar, a restaurant in Ghirardelli Square. The waitresses, in brown flowing robes with hoods, looked like monks. One of the gentlemen jokingly asked their waitress what religious order they belonged to. She smiled impishly and said, “Well, one of our customers calls us the Tourist Trappists.”

“Who said the following?” asked the Sunday school teacher. “Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.”

A young student answered enthusiastically, “Little Bo-peep!”

One rainy autumn day, an Anglican bishop walked into a store. The clerk remarked how wet and miserable the day was and asked if the bishop could do anything about it, since he had the right connections. The bishop replied with a grin, “Oh, I’m afraid there’s nothing I can do. You see, I’m in sales, not management.”

When asked if he ever looked up to the galleries of the House of Lords to see if there was anybody listening to him, Lord Ramsay, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, replied with a twinkle, “I am ALWAYS looking upward to see if anybody is there.”

Looking over the rim of the volcano’s crater, the American tourist remarked, “Reminds one of Hell, doesn’t it?”

The guide threw up his hands and exclaimed “These Americans! They’ve been everywhere!”

A rather portly archbishop checked in at Glasgow airport and was deep in thought, studying his ticket, when the official handling his luggage remarked, “You are slightly overweight.”

“Yes,” replied the archbishop without looking up, “but it doesn’t show when I’m robed.”

A young man confided to his priest that he and his wife had been trying unsuccessfully to have a much wanted family. The priest said that he couldn’t council them, because he was on urgent assignment to the Vatican and he was obliged to depart for Rome within the hour. He promised, however, that he would pray for them, and when he got to Rome, he would daily light a candle for them.

Five years later, he returned from Rome, and one of his first actions was to look up the young couple. He found the wife, surrounded by her five children aged from newborn to five years old. The priest asked where her husband was. “He’s gone to the Vatican in Rome,” the wife replied seriously. “Whatever for?” enquired the startled priest.

“To blow out a candle!” grinned the wife.

This story was one of those “zingers” that came from the Internet - somewhere in the Netherlands. While unsuitable for a church bulletin, it might be fun in its proper time and place.

It’s the last supper, and as everyone is finishing their meal, the bill is presented to Jesus. “Heavens above!” says Jesus, “I can’t afford this.” He passes the bill to Peter.

“Good God”, says Peter, “nor me” and passes the bill to Mark.

“Lord save us”, says Mark, “not me either”, and he passes the bill to Judas.

“Oh, yeah...” says Judas, “... and where am I supposed to find thirty pieces of silver?”

Three guys died and found themselves at the Pearly Gates, but St. Peter was temporarily away and could not admit them. The guard at the Gate asked each to chose a place they always wanted to go, or something they always wanted to be, and while they waited, their choice would be granted. The first man wanted to fly like an eagle high over the Rockies. The second wanted to lounge on a sail boat in the South Pacific. The third declared that he always wanted to be a stud.

The guard looked puzzled for a moment, then smiled and waved his hand. The three vanished.

Some time later, Saint Peter returned to the gate and wanted to know where the three were waiting.

The guard said that one was an eagle gliding over the Rockies, the second was on a sail boat in the South Pacific, and the third was a stud in a tire somewhere in Virginia.

-- Harold Reid, Bass Singer with the Statler Brothers

Jesus, Moses and an old man were out playing golf one day. They came to a very long par-3 hole that was water from tee to green. Jesus was the first to play. He shot the ball directly into the water, walked across the water and chipped onto the green. Moses was next to shoot. He also shot the ball into the water, parted the water and chipped onto the green. The old man was last to play. He too shot the ball into the water. Along came a fish and swallowed the ball. An eagle overhead swooped down and caught the fish. As the eagle flew over the green, the ball fell from the fish’s mouth and landed directly in the cup. Jesus turned to the old man and said, “Dad, I sure wish you’d quit fooling around and just play golf.”

A thief breaks into a house and makes his way to the front room. Seeing a nice stereo television there, he decides to help himself when suddenly from behind him, he hears a voice saying “I can see you and so can Jesus.” He spins around but there’s no-one there. Puzzled, he decides to grab the TV and get out of the house. Suddenly, he hears the voice again. “I can see you and so can Jesus”.

The thief knows he can’t be imagining this now, so he races across the room and turns on the light. There is still no-one there, but then he notices a cage in the corner with a sheet over it. He tip-toes across the room and carefully lifts the sheet, to find a parrot. The thief says, “Well, well! So that was you speaking, was it?”

“Yes it was.” replies the parrot.

“What’s your name?” asks the thief.

Replies the parrot, “My name is Zechariah.”

“That’s a silly name for a parrot!” says the thief.

The parrot replies, “Not as silly as Jesus is for a Rottweiler!”

There's something about May that goes to one's head - pollen!

He who talks like a big wheel may be only a spokesman. - Jon Berryhill in "Boys' Life

... and the Insurance agent said to Adam and Eve, "I can see that you are not covered."

Just after they heard about the engagement, his fiance's family was eager to give them advice. Her uncle took him aside and told him that it is very important to be the first one to speak after the wedding. "The person who speaks first will be the one in control", he said.

At the wedding ceremony, as they turned to walk down the aisle as man and wife, eager to be the first to speak, he opened his mouth to tell her that he loved her, but before he could get a word out, she said, "Don't step on my train."

When her late husband's will was read, his widow learned that he had left the bulk of his fortune to another woman. Enraged, she rushed out to change the inscription on her spouse's tombstone.

"Sorry, lady," said the stone cutter, "but I inscribed 'Rest in Peace' on your orders, and I can't change it now."

"Very well," the widow said grimly, "just add 'Until we meet again'".

Too busy to break away from his work, a radio DJ and his bride held their wedding ceremony in a second floor conference room over his studio. So many fans showed up that the building collapsed. The moral? - Never marry above your station.

A trout angler dies and finds himself near a beautiful stream where a guide hands him a rod and suggests casting to a fish rising off the far bank. Never before able to cast that far, the angler is amazed when he lands a two pound trout. Soon he catches several more two pounders in the same spot. Excitedly, he suggests exploring the river. "The rules of this river require that you cast to every rising trout" explains the guide.

A dozen two pounders later, the angler remarks "This no longer seems like heaven to me."

"I never said it was" replied the guide.

A child's greatest period of growth comes the month after you've purchased new school clothes.
- Orben's Current Comedy

In December, we jingled the bells. Then, in January, we'll juggle the bills.

Several years ago, a young man was doing carpentry at a Catholic convent when a sudden strong

gust of wind grabbed a sheet of plywood and flung it through a newly installed bay window. In his anger, he let out a few blasphemous words, and then remembering where he was, he turned to see an elderly nun standing nearby. "I'm so sorry about my language," he began, but she put her hand up to silence him.

"There is no need to apologise," she said, "you just brought back a flood of childhood memories. You see, my father was a carpenter too."

The Christmas favourite, "Jingle Bells" tells of a ride in a one horse open sleigh. Do you know the name of the horse pulling the sleigh?

“🎵 Bells on Bob’s tail ring🎵”

One hot, dry day in the West, a traveller arrived at a small highway cafe. Wiping the sweat from his brow, he turned to a deeply tanned old-timer sitting at the counter and asked, "When was the last time it rained here?"

The old-timer replied, "Son, you remember where the Bible says it rained for 40 days and 40 nights?"

"Well, yes I do."

The old man continued, "We got an inch."

An angel appeared at a faculty meeting and informed the dean that in return for his unselfish and exemplary behaviour, the Lord has decided to reward him now with his choice of infinite wealth, wisdom, or beauty. Without hesitation, the dean chose wisdom.

"Done!" said the angel, disappearing in a bolt of lightning. All heads turned toward the dean, who just sat there, surrounded by a faint halo of light.

At length, one of his colleagues whispers, "Say something."

The dean looked at them reflectively. "I should have taken the money."

During a lecture on basic human needs, a teacher asked "Suppose you are on a space walk and you became detached from your space ship without a life support system. What would be your most immediate need?"

One student's spontaneous response earned him full marks. He replied "Eternal life."

On an episode of "Cottage Country" on CBC-TV, Novelist John Irving gave the viewers a guided tour of his cottage. As the camera entered a bathroom flooded with brilliant sunlight and tilted up to show a skylight in the bathroom ceiling, Irving remarked "I find it a somewhat heavenly invasion of privacy."

The leader of a Sunday Morning Service decided to open things up for some impromptu sharing. He asked what we could thank God for, and invited the congregation to respond. The answers varied....

"Our health; our freedom in Canada; our friendship; our families;..".

One young boy enthusiastically called out "Our brothers and sisters!"

Immediately another boy indignantly replied "Not my sister!"

A doctor went to heaven and found himself in a long line waiting for an admission interview with Saint Peter. He asked if he could go to the head of the line because of his life-long caring for his fellow man, but he was told he would have to wait his turn like everyone else. After a long wait, his interview began. Suddenly, he saw another doctor, still wearing white gowns and stethoscope, walk right up past the line, and when he got to the gate, St Peter jumped up, held the gate open, saying "Good afternoon, doctor. " and allowed the doctor to walk briskly past. The doctor being interviewed was about to protest to Saint Peter when the Saint smiled and said, "It's not what you think. That was God. Every once in a while, he likes to play doctor."

The bishop was assigning a new priest to Parliament Hill as the Chaplain for the House of Commons, the Senate, and the Hill employees. He was told that his duties would include observing sessions of the two houses from time to time. "And then I pray for the politicians?" he asked. "No," replied the bishop, "then you pray for the country."

A computer programmer died and found himself at the Pearly Gates. Saint Peter told him that he could choose heaven or hell. The programmer asked if he could see a sample of heaven. The Saint obliged, and they toured a place of peace, worship and great joy. Then the programmer asked if he could see a sample of hell. He was shown a place of great partying, wine, women, and song. Without a second thought, the computer programmer chose hell. Instantly, he found himself in a place of fire, pitchforks and suffering. He cried out to Saint Peter, "This is nothing like what you showed me that hell was like!"

"That," replied the Saint, "was what you and some of you computer people refer to as 'just a demo'."

An English clergymen turned to a Scottish colleague and asked him, "What would you be if you were not a Scot?"

"Why, English, of course!" came the reply.

Then the Englishman turned to an Irish colleague and asked, "and what would you be if you were not an Irishman?"

The man thought for a moment and then replied, "I'd be ashamed of meself!"

In the Middle East there is a legend about a spindly little sparrow, lying on its back, feet to the sky, in the middle of the road. A horseman comes by and asks the sparrow what he is doing upside down. "I heard the heavens are going to fall," said the sparrow.

"Oh," said the horseman, "and I suppose your puny legs can hold them up?"

"One does what one can," replied the sparrow.

One good thing about Christmas shopping it toughens you for the January sales.

When the parishioners entered the church one Sunday morning they were confronted by a rope blocking off thirteen rear pews. A sign attached read: "NOTICE: We are giving up these back pews for Lent. For the Lord's sake, please sit up front."

A young man's mother was lecturing him on how neat and tidy he should be for his new bride. Her admonitions continued until her husband interrupted "Leave him alone, dear, he's under new management now."

In a resounding voice, a cantor bragged to his congregation, "Two years ago I insured my voice with Lloyds of London for \$750,000."

The crowded room was hushed. Suddenly, an elderly woman spoke. "So," she said, "what did you do with the money?"

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl asked her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?"

"Because white is the colour of happiness" her mother explained. "Today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment. "So why is the groom wearing black?"

A fallen woman is a mother whose children didn't pick up their toys.

Attempting to tee off, a golfer missed the ball altogether. Red-faced, he looked up at his caddie and mumbled "oops." He carefully took another swing but this time he overcorrected and hit the ground slightly ahead of the ball, bending his best club. His caddie heard him cheerfully whisper, "well, my goodness." The duffer took out another club, rechecked his stance, and then sliced the ball straight into a tree. The ball bounced straight back and walloped him on the forehead. "That's it!" he shouted, "I quit!"

"You're gonna quit golf?" the caddie asked.

"No," replied the golfer, "I'm quitting the Priesthood!"

As two priests travelled along a country road, the first was remonstrating with the second about his habit of constantly interrupting himself. "Tell ya what I'll do," said the first priest, "I'll wager you my horse that you won't be able to recite the Our Father to the end without stopping."

The second priest agreed to the bet and started the prayer. About half way through, he looked up and asked, "Do I get the saddle too?"

A client brought a litter of golden retriever puppies to a veterinary clinic for inoculations and worming. As the look-a-like puppies squirmed over and under one another in their box, the vet realized that it would be difficult to tell the treated ones from the rest. He turned on the water faucet, wet his fingers, and moistened each dog's head after he had finished. After the fourth puppy, the vet

noticed that the hitherto talkative client had grown silent. As he sprinkled the last pup's head, the woman leaned forward and whispered. "I didn't know they had to be baptized."

A group of ministers were meeting for lunch and they were discussing sermon preparation. The Baptist minister explained that he devoted the month of July to writing all of his sermons for the coming year. The Presbyterian colleague said that he outlined on Mondays and then wrote on the following days. The Rabbi set aside Wednesday morning for preparation. The Catholic priest confessed to hurrying to meet his deadlines on Saturday nights. The Anglican priest had the final say. "Well," he hedged, "I usually schedule a long hymn before the sermon."

At a party the hostess served a guest a cup of punch and told him that it was spiked. Next, she served some to a minister. "I would rather commit adultery than allow liquor to pass my lips" he shouted. Hearing this, the first man poured his punch back and said "I didn't know we had a choice!"

Son:"Where do bees go after they get married?"

Dad:"I don't know, where do bees go after they get married?"

Son:"On their honeymoon, of course."

At the conclusion of a Mother's Day sermon about honouring mothers all year, the congregation rose and sang, "This Is My Father's World."

While in college, a girl dated her future husband, who was preparing for the ministry. One Sunday, she accompanied him to a nearby church where he was to preach. Anxious to make a good impression, she sat in the front row and remained its lone occupant. At the conclusion of the service, the song leader announced the final hymn. She stood and joined in the singing, but the song leader kept directing nervous glances towards her. During the second verse, this intensified to an unmistakable stare. Disconcerted, she began to check her dress for static cling. Finally, the man smiled with resignation, and at the end of the verse he said to the congregation, "For the last verse, why don't we all stand?"

The Sunday after Easter a minister got up and looked over the congregation, which was quite a bit smaller than the previous week, and said, "Well, I see the Easter lilies are gone, but the perennials are still here."

A university co-ed had been dating two students - a dairy farming major, and an English major with ambitions to become a poet. Both had proposed, and the girl was in a quandary; she couldn't decide whether to marry for butter or verse.

In Paris, a group of American tourists entered a large cathedral. Seeing a wedding in progress, one

of the Americans whispered to a Frenchman nearby, "Who's the groom?"

The native shrugged and said, "Je ne sais pas."

As the group continued through the cathedral, they came upon a funeral service. The American whispered to another Frenchman, "Who died?"

The man replied, "Je ne sais pas."

"Wow," the American said, "he didn't last long, did he?"

A husband and wife drove for hours in silence after a terrible argument in which neither would budge. The husband pointed to a mule in a pasture. "Relative of yours?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, and then added "by marriage."

An economics professor was teaching his students about the stock market and directed them to invest imaginary accounts, keeping track of all gains and losses. He also advised them to diversify their holdings.

One theology major was doing particularly well, but decided to sell everything and invest it all in a bakery. He had heard that it was a takeover target, which would cause the stock to rise. This failed to happen however, and the price dropped, almost wiping him out. The professor asked if he had learned anything from the exercise. The theology student replied, "Yes sir. Man does not live by bread alone."

A couple announced their engagement and set their wedding date for seventeen months later so they could improve their financial position. The following month, the young man gave his bride-to-be 16 roses, one for each of the months left.

"How wonderful," she gushed. "Next month I'll get 15."

"No," he replied, "each month you throw one away."

When George Burns was asked about his title role in the film "Oh, God!", the elderly star explained that "it wasn't hard to play God, because at my age, everything I do is a miracle."

When hockey great Ken Dryden took a friend and his son out to dinner, seated around the table were the father, the son, and the goalie host.

Gratitude is a sometime thing in this world. Just because you've been feeding them all winter, don't expect the birds to take it easy on your grass seed.

- Bill Vaughan

As the Osgoode Township Male Choir flew across the Atlantic ocean to begin their 1994 tour of the Netherlands, their plane encountered some very severe turbulence and the passengers were subjected to a brutal ride. One of the group, a well known minister, sat placidly through the ordeal. His wife became more and more pale. He was asked later how he had remained so calm. The minister replied, "I was praying to the Lord. When things were at their worst, I asked him to prepare to

receive my wife. That was when the turbulence suddenly stopped.”

On Sunday mornings, after the service at a large downtown church, the parking lot is the scene of a great race to leave, in which it's every driver for himself. One Sunday, an enthusiastic teenage parishioner stopped the usual surge when he climbed onto his car and shouted, "Christians, start your engines!"

Tom and Jerry were partners in a profitable painting-contracting business. Unfortunately, they weren't entirely honest, because they mixed their paint with water. One day Jerry's conscience started to bother him as they painted a poor widow's house. The next day, Jerry told Tom that he just couldn't be dishonest any more. "Don't quit now," Tom begged, "a few more jobs and we can retire."

Jerry refused to change his mind. "Tom," he said, "I just can't do it. Last night an angel stood by my bed and said 'Repaint, you thinner.'"

Here's another of those Internet zingers:

Parts 9 & 10 were obviously not used in a bulletin! - but since they came with the story from the source in Australia they are included here for "completeness"

The new priest was so nervous at his first Mass that he could hardly speak. Before his second appearance in the pulpit he asked the Monsignor how he could relax. The Monsignor said "Next Sunday it may help if you put some Vodka in the water pitcher. After a few sips of that everything should go smoothly."

The next Sunday the new priest put the suggestion into practice and he was able to talk up a storm. He felt great. However, upon returning to the rectory, he found a note from the Monsignor. It read:

1. Next time SIP, don't GULP.
2. There are 10 Commandments, not 12.
3. There are 12 Disciples, not 10.
4. We don't refer to the Cross as the "Big T"
5. The recommended Grace before meals is not "Rub-a-dub-dub, thanks for the grub".
6. David SLEW Goliath, he didn't "beat the @%#*" out of him.
7. Don't refer to Jesus Christ and His Apostles as "JC and the Boys".
8. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are not referred to as "Big Daddy, Junior, and the Spook".
9. We refer to the Virgin Mary; not "Mary with the Cherry".
10. Finally, in the announcements, there will be a Taffy pulling party at St. Peter's church; not a Peter pulling party at St. Taffy's church.

A rabbi and a young catholic priest are travelling together. The rabbi asks the priest, "Tell me, Father, what are your career prospects?"

"Well, I could become Elder of my monastery later on", replied the priest.

"Ah, nice. And after?"

“Well, I could also become Prior, maybe”

“Ah, nice. And after?”

“Ok, maybe I will be elected Bishop”

“Good! and after?”

The priest feeling increasingly annoyed, comes up with Archbishop, Cardinal and even Pope, but the rabbi continues to ask “Sounds good, and after that..?”

At the end of his patience, the priest shouts: “What else do you expect??! I couldn’t possibly become the Messiah personally now, could I ?!”

The rabbi smiles victoriously, leans back in his seat and says, “Well, one of OUR boys made it...”

Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed. - Alexander Pope

Maturity is the ability to do a job whether or not you are supervised, to carry money without spending it, and to bear an injustice without wanting to get even. -- Ann Landers

Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face. -- Victor Hugo

This zinger came from a friend in Denmark.

While unsuitable for bulletin use, it is a good story for less formal occasions:

A man is driving down a deserted stretch of highway, when he notices a sign out of the corner of his eye. It says SISTERS OF MERCY HOUSE OF PROSTITUTION 10 MILES. He thinks it was just a figment of his imagination and drives on without a second thought. Soon, he sees another sign which says SISTERS OF MERCY HOUSE OF PROSTITUTION 5 MILES and realizes that these signs are for real. When he drives past a third sign saying SISTERS OF MERCY HOUSE OF PROSTITUTION NEXT RIGHT, his curiosity gets the best of him and he pulls into the drive.

On the far side of the parking lot is a sombre stone building with a small sign next to the door reading SISTERS OF MERCY. He climbs the steps and rings the bell. The door is answered by a nun in a long black habit who asks “What may we do for you, my son?”

He answers “I saw your signs along the highway, and was interested in possibly doing business.”

“Very well, my son. Please follow me.”

He is led through many winding passages and is soon quite disoriented. The nun stops at a closed door, and tells the man “Please knock on this door.” He does as he is told and this door is answered by another nun in a long habit and holding a tin cup.

This nun instructs “Please place \$50 in the cup, then go through the large wooden door at the end of this hallway.” He gets \$50 out of his wallet and places it in the second nun’s cup. He trots eagerly down the hall and slips through the door, pulling it shut behind him.

As the door locks behind him, he finds himself back in the parking lot, facing another small sign: GO IN PEACE, YOU HAVE JUST BEEN SCREWED BY THE SISTERS OF MERCY.

Joe was out driving in the hills when he hit a rabbit. He stopped and walked back to the lifeless

animal to move it off the road, when another car pulled up behind him.

A priest got out and walked over and asked if everything was OK.

“No” Joe said, “I’ve just run over this rabbit and I’ve killed it”.

The priest said “Maybe I can help” and drew from his pocket a small vial of liquid. He sprinkled it on the rabbit and stood back.

Sure enough, the little animal stirred, sat up, took a look at them, and bolted up the side of the hill. Half way up the hill it stopped, turned around and waved at them. It then continued up the slope. A little further on it stopped again, turned around again and waved at them again. Joe looked at the priest for explanation but the priest simply smiled. Just before the rabbit disappeared over the top of the hill it turned to them and waved again.

Stunned, Joe said to the priest “That’s incredible. Was that Holy Water you sprinkled on the rabbit?”

“No” replied the priest, it was a hare restorer with a permanent wave”.

Late one night, after an evening of drinking, Smitty took a short cut through the grave yard and stumbled into a newly dug grave. He could not get out, so he lay at the bottom, and soon fell asleep. Early next morning, the old caretaker heard moans and groans coming from deep in the earth. He went over to investigate, saw the shivering figure at the bottom, and demanded, “Wot’s rong with ya that yer makin’ all that noise?”

“Oh, I’m awful cold” came the response.

“Well, it’s no wonder,” replied the caretaker, ‘You’ve gone an kicked all the dirt off ya!’

A minister was mending his fence when he noticed a neighbour’s son paying close attention to the job. “Getting some pointers on mending fences, Harold?” the clergyman asked.

“No, sir,” the boy replied, “I’m just waiting to hear what a preacher says when he smashes his thumb with a hammer.”

The minister was on the golf course when he heard a duffer deep in a sand trap let loose a stream of profanity. “I have often noticed,” chided the minister, “that the best golfers are not addicted to the use of foul language.”

“Of course not,” replied the man, “what do they have to swear about?”

A lady had recently lost her husband. She sat with her young grandson one evening, and the young boy was asking questions about his grandfather. Suddenly a shocked look crossed his face, and he took his grandmother’s hand. “Did Grandpa wear his pyjamas to heaven?”

“No, honey,” his grandma replied, “he wore his blue suit.”

The child relaxed. “Phew,” he said, “if he wore his pyjamas, he couldn’t go out for a beer.”

All through their engagement, a young man teased his fiancée about how she had “trapped” him into proposing. He claimed he was just an innocent bystander who had been swept into the upcoming nuptials. On their wedding day, the groom waited for his bride at the altar. As her parents gave him her hand in matrimony, he turned to her and whispered “Gotcha!”

Bigamy: The only crime where two rites make a wrong.

-- Bob Hope

George Burns once totally broke up Jack Benny when he related this story on Benny's radio program of a famous comedian who had died and found himself in a bright empty room.

In front of him stood a spirit in flowing robes looking at a ledger. The spirit looked up at him. "I've examined the record of your life, and I think you deserve this." the spirit told the fellow as he handed him six type-written pages. As soon as the comedian began reading, he realized what he was holding - the "Golden Routine" - the best humour material ever written. "I must be in heaven!" he shouted. "Not exactly," replied the spirit, "what will you do for an audience?"

An elderly couple admitted by St Peter through the Pearly Gates found conditions just heavenly. Said the man to his wife, "I could have been here two years ago if you hadn't fed me all that oat bran!"

During a long and boring sermon, a small boy noticed the red glow of the sanctuary lamp over the altar. Turning to his father he whispered, "When the light turns green, can we go?"

A minister preached an object lesson in which he used potatoes and gave each a name such as imitater, dic-tater, and agi-tater. Then he likened them to problem people in the church. He summed up by urging each member of the congregation to be a sweet-tater. On leaving the service, one parishioner shook his hand and said, "I yam what I yam."

Hospitalized after an automobile accident, a young lady was visited by a contingent of nuns from the small Catholic college that she attended. They had been praying for her, they said. One priest had mentioned her at morning mass, another mentioned her at afternoon chapel, and the sisters themselves prayed for her all the time.

"Thank you very much," she said, feeling a little guilty, "but will it count? I'm not a Catholic ..."

"Don't you worry, my dear." said one of the older nuns, placing her hand gently on the girl's hand,

"We just say the prayers. Then God can do whatever he wants with you."

When a newlywed priest and his bride moved into their new house in a farming community, they discovered that their next door neighbours kept chickens. They wondered if it would cause problems - early morning crowing, invasion of their gardens, possible odours - and apparently the neighbours anticipated their concern. In their mailbox the next day, the priest's bride found a congratulatory card, together with five handwritten tickets, each good for one dozen eggs.

The most important thing in life is to love someone. The second most important thing in life is to have someone love you. The third most important thing is to have the first two happen at the same time.

Church sign: "Think metric. Observe the Ten Commandments."

Did you know that in Monte Carlo they don't post the numbers of the hymns to be sung in the local churches because, if they do, gamblers come in to read the numbers and then rush to the casino to play them at roulette!
(Reader's Digest, May '79)

A family who had been renting in a one church town purchased the house that was between the home of the priest and the home of the church warden. When one of their friends teased them saying that they would now have to walk the straight and narrow, the new owner replied, "Oh not at all! I expect to go to heaven on the up draught."

Well begun is half done. - Greek Proverb

A couple were making plans for their wedding which was four months away. One of the first things they looked into was transportation for the bridal party. The only company that rented a limousine was a funeral parlour in the neighbouring town, so the bride-to-be gave them a call. She was told that the limo would be available if there's no funeral on that day.

Without thinking, she asked "Can you please check and see if you have any funerals booked on that day?"

If you think that one individual can't make a difference in the world, consider what one cigar can do in a nine-room house. - - Bill Vaughan

The horn of plenty is the one the guy behind you has on his car. - Monta Crane

Did you hear about the crossword puzzle addict who died and was buried six feet down and three across? - Victor Marlier

A monastery in financial trouble decided to go into the fish-and - chip business. One night, a customer rapped on the door and a monk answered. "Are you the fish friar?" the customer asked. "No," the robed figure replied, "I'm the chip monk."

Nero was discussing finances with one of his officers in the amphitheatre in Rome. "We aren't making much money from this building," Nero said, "Any Idea why?" "Yes, Your Majesty," replied the officer, "the lions are eating up all the prophets."

The pastor of a two point parish drove sixteen kilometres after the 9:30 am service at one church to

get to the other church for the 11 am service.

Upon arrival, he would often find the parking lot full and be forced to park down the road and race back to the church on foot.

The problem was finally solved when he selected a parking spot near the side door of the church, where he posted a sign: YOU PARK - YOU PREACH.

Item in a small town newspaper social column:

“Mrs C had her church for supper Monday evening ...”

The regular minister was sick, and a pastor known for his never-ending sermons agreed to fill in. When he stood up in the pulpit, he was annoyed to find only ten worshippers present, including the choir. Afterwards, he complained to the warden. That was a very small turnout,” he said. “Were they not informed that I was coming?”

“No,” replied the warden, “but word must have leaked out!”

While a chaplain at a west coast university, a priest had the opportunity of learning several Japanese greetings from a group of Japanese students on campus. He found the informal greeting for “hello”, “O-HI-O”, easy to remember until the day he casually tried to use it. On meeting a group of Japanese tourists visiting the campus, he bowed slightly and said “Idaho”.

“Good morning to you too, Father,” was the giggly but respectful reply in perfect English, “but you’ve got the wrong state!”

A young army chaplain returned to his home town on leave, and looking very handsome in his uniform, he attended a get-together at a friend’s house. An attractive woman sidled up to him and started a conversation. “What are you doing Saturday night?” she asked.

“Hearing confessions,” he replied.

The minister of a local church was walking down the street one day when he recognised the town drunk unsteadily ambling along. “Drunk again!” remarked the minister as they met.

“Me too!” said the drunk, tipping his hat.

A nun was the only one in the office of a small church when a delivery man came to the door with several boxes. She assured him that it was the correct address, but he seemed hesitant to leave the boxes with her. It wasn’t until she went to move the boxes that she understood his confusion. Stamped in bold letters across the sides were the contents: “Madonna Calendars.”

To have a right to do a thing is not at all the same as to be right in doing it. - G.K. Chesterton

Marriage is the only union that cannot be organized. Both sides think they are management.

- William J. Abley

God said to Jesus, "Come forth and you will have eternal life." Jesus came fifth and won a toaster.

Shared joy is double joy and shared sorrow is half-sorrow.

Opening line of a missionary recruitment ad in a magazine:

"Ever think of going into your Father's business?"

A husband was convinced that his wife was unfaithful while he was at work. Insanely jealous, he planned to trap her. He called their apartment one afternoon to say he wouldn't be home until midnight. Early that evening he arrived home and saw that the dining table was set for two. "Aha!" he shouted, "I've caught you!" He dashed from room to room, opening closets and overturning furniture. Finally, he ran onto the balcony, and far below saw a man straightening his tie as he left the building. In a rage, the husband pushed the refrigerator over the balcony. It landed on the man below, killing him.

The scene now shifts to the Pearly Gates, where St. Peter is interviewing two candidates.

"What brings you here?" asks St. Peter.

The first man replied that he was strolling out of a shop on the ground floor of an apartment building. He stopped to adjust his tie and was hit by a refrigerator that fell from a balcony.

"What a shame," exclaimed St. Peter. "You may enter."

The second candidate approaches St. Peter and said, "I know you're not going to believe me, but there I was sitting inside this refrigerator"

Two nuns were making calls in a tough part of town one wet winter morning. When they got back into their car, they said a little prayer to help get the stubborn thing started, bowing their heads and blessing themselves before trying the engine. The battery was giving its last gasps when one of the toughest looking thugs in the neighbourhood tapped on the window. He motioned for the nuns to get out of the car. Frightened, they obeyed and allowed him to squeeze behind the wheel. The motor started for him instantly. He climbed out and returned the car to them. When they thanked him, he replied, "That's all right, sisters, I ain't never been the answer to a prayer before."

A few years ago, The Reverend John Dennert was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Delavan Wisconsin. His brother, The Reverend Robert Dennert, was the United Methodist minister.

"Which Rev. Dennert do you mean?" a woman inquired.

"You know," came the reply, "John - the Baptist."

March has always been the first day of spring, but it rarely has the last day of winter. You can tell, though, that spring is near because there are subtle little signs - like when you start your car in the morning, and it does. Early spring is the time of year for the bulbs you didn't get planted last fall not

to come up.

The Reverend James King often paraphrased Biblical passages in his sermons instead of quoting the King James version. His parishioners referred to his paraphrases as the “James King version.”

Anybody who sleeps like a baby doesn't have one. -- Franklin P. Jones in Good Housekeeping.

A fellow was telling his friend a story:

This angel named Carruthers was called in to the heavenly front office and informed by St. Peter that he had been chosen to undertake a special assignment. He was to go down to earth and make a list of all the people who indulged in hanky-panky. Two months went by and then one afternoon the angel came flapping wearily through the gates and collapsed on a golden stool by St. Peter's desk. “Sir,” he said, “you don't know the magnitude of this job. I'm going to need some help.”

“Impossible,” Saint Peter replied tersely. We're shorthanded as it is. You'll have to buckle down and do it alone.”

The angel struggled to the door and was suddenly struck with an idea. “Sir, suppose I made a list of all the people on earth who didn't hanky-panky. It would be much shorter and I could finish it in a week.”

“Good thinking,” said Saint Peter. The angel returned to earth, and as promised, he returned within the week with a completed list. Saint Peter looked it over, and passed it up the chain of command. Shortly, an order came down that a letter was to be written to everyone on the list commending them for not fooling around.

At this point, the person who was telling this story looked at his listener and said, “And do you know what the letter said?”

“What?” asked the listener.

“AH HA! So you didn't get one either!”

Funeral services were being conducted for a woman who had been thoroughly disliked in her community. With a violent, explosive disposition, she henpecked her husband, drove her children mercilessly and quarrelled with her neighbours. The day of the funeral was sultry and as the service ended, a violent storm broke. There was a blinding flash of lightning, followed by a terrific clap of thunder. “Well,” remarked one of the mourners, “she got there.”

A mother and her four year old daughter received the gift of tickets to see the ballet “Swan Lake”. Mother tried to prepare her daughter for this cultural experience, taking care to discuss the beautiful scene in which the swan dies in all her artistic grace.

On the night of the performance, mother and daughter proudly sat back in their front row orchestra seats. Throughout the performance, daughter was perfectly behaved and completely absorbed. Then came the poignant moment when the swan ballerina danced solo on the stage, leaping and pirouetting majestically, seemingly for mother and daughter alone. Never taking her eyes off the dancer, daughter spoke in a clear voice that carried to the highest balcony: “Is that the dead duck?” Mother would have gladly slithered into the orchestra pit, but the audience grinned, the conductor

winked, and the lovely dying swan smiled and nodded ever so slightly.

When the pastor of a rural church died, the congregation insisted that the most senior deacon take over until a replacement could be found. The deacon approached the first Sunday's service reluctantly, expecting a lot of criticism at his feeble efforts to fill the pastor's shoes. He did not, however, come unprepared.

"How many of you have brought a pencil?" he asked immediately before the service. Hands went up all over the church. "And a piece of paper?" he continued. Envelopes, cards and grocery lists were waved aloft. "Good!" he exclaimed. "We are going to have a contest. I want you to listen very carefully this morning for any mistakes I might make and write it down. Don't hold anything back. The more critical your list, the better. The lists will be taken up at the end of the service." He then fixed the congregation with a stern gaze and paused for effect. "And the one who has made the longest list," he pronounced, "will win the Grand Prize - preaching next Sunday's sermon."

Sin doesn't harm us as much as our own righteousness.

-- Martin Luther.

Tom Lasorda, manager of the LA Dodgers, in a 1978 radio interview in Montreal: "I was receiving communion on a Sunday morning in St. Louis, before a Dodgers-Cardinals game, when the priest leaned close to me and whispered 'I hope you lose today.' As I left the church, I told him that I was shocked by his behaviour at Mass and would have to report him to the Pope. I added, 'His Holiness is a Dodger fan, you know.'

'Oh, no he isn't,' said the priest. 'The Pope is an ex-Cardinal.'"

A young soldier lost his bayonet. Rather than face the consequences of admitting the misdemeanour, he carved out an excellent imitation of the missing weapon. For weeks, he went about his duties with the fake in his scabbard, safe from censure so long as his handiwork went undetected. When the inevitable order came to "Fix bayonets", however, he was undone. He simply stood there, his scabbard untouched. The sergeant demanded an explanation.

"It's a promise I made to my father," said the soldier. "As he lay on his deathbed, I told him I would never bare a bayonet on the anniversary of his death."

"That's the damndest fish story I ever heard," thundered the sergeant. "Let me see the bayonet."

"For breaking a solemn promise," said the soldier as he drew the bayonet, "may the Lord turn this to wood!"

-- Walter Winchell

During a raging snow storm, the local schools were closed. When the children returned to class, the teacher asked an eight year old boy if he'd used his time constructively during the unexpected vacation. "Yes, ma'am," he replied, "I prayed for more snow."

A priest complained that a colleague had brought a surge of popularity to the ritual of confession. The priest argued that he sometimes waited an hour for someone to come to confess, but penitents lined up for blocks to tell all to the second priest.

The explanation? The second priest is deaf.

A nine year old came home from school on the Monday before Easter so excited that she could hardly speak. According to the girl, this was to be the last week of the school year. Knowing they were three months from the end of the school year, her mother said she must be mistaken. “No, Mom, it’s true. They even sent home a note about it.” said the girl. “The note says that all schools will be closed for good, Friday.

Hired to perform as a magician at a church banquet, a magician closed his act by magically producing candy for all of the children, then took a seat next to the podium to listen to the guest speaker. It wasn’t long before he noticed a small boy in the fourth row trying to get his attention. Efforts to ignore the boy were fruitless, and finally the speaker turned to the magician and said, “I suppose if I am ever to continue, you should find out what is troubling that young man.”

Embarrassed, the magician went to the child. “What’s wrong?” he asked.

In a loud voice, the boy replied, “My mom says I can’t eat candy. Could you make mine a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?”

A wedding is an event, but a marriage is an achievement.

-- Dr Joyce Brothers

The choir loft of the church sat below the eye level of the congregation. Running across the entire front of the church was a velvet-draped railing. The choir was required for two services each Sunday morning. Several of the more creative choir members discovered that after finishing the anthem at the early service, they could crawl on hands and knees behind the railing and exit through a side door. Then they could buy fresh doughnuts and coffee around the corner and then return to the morning service undetected.

One Sunday, an elderly, distinguished-looking bass singer made a successful exit. On the return trip, however, he realized that he would have to crawl back carrying the bag of doughnuts between his teeth. It wasn’t until he was half way across that he noticed the laughter spreading throughout the congregation. He was on the wrong side of the railing.

While waiting in line at a bank, a minister developed a very loud case of hiccups. By the time he reached the teller’s window, the hiccups seem to have worsened.

The Teller took his cheque and ran a computer verification of his account. After a minute, she looked up from her terminal with a frown and said that she would be unable to cash his cheque. “I’m sorry, sir, but our computer indicates that you do not have sufficient funds to cover this amount. As a matter of fact,” she continued, “our records show your account overdrawn in excess of \$5,000.” “It can’t be!” the minister cried. “You have to be kidding!”

“Yes, I am,” she answered with a smile, counting out his cash, “but you will notice that your hiccups are gone.”

It isn’t tying himself to one woman that a man dreads when he thinks of marrying; it’s separating himself from all the others.

-- Helen Rowland

A five year old girl was given a helium filled balloon. She carried it with her all day without losing or breaking it. Late in the day, she tripped and let go of the balloon. Tearfully, she watched as it disappeared into the clouds. Then her face brightened, and she said, "I wish I hadn't let it go, but won't God be surprised!"

A Russian, a Frenchman, and an American met at the gates of heaven and started chatting. Before long, they found that a car was responsible for each of their untimely deaths. The American had been driving at 160 kph when a tire blew out. The Frenchman has been parked on the banks of the Seine with his girlfriend when his brakes failed and the car went into the river. The Russian explained, "For ten years, I tried to save money to buy a car - and I died of starvation."

One can pay back the loan of gold, but one dies forever in debt to those who are kind.

-- Malayan proverb

A priest suddenly became ill and asked his twin brother, also a priest, to fill in for him and conduct a funeral mass scheduled for that day. His brother, of course, agreed. It was not until the brother was accompanying the casket down the isle, however, that he realized that he had neglected to ask the sex of the deceased. This was information that he would need for his remarks during the service. As he approached the first pew where the deceased's relatives were seated, he nodded toward the casket and whispered to one woman, "Brother or sister?" "Cousin," she replied.

Found in a newspaper item about Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinners:

"They will serve the same fish as last year".

A child lied when she said that she had seen a lion in the rose garden. She was sent to her room and told to stand in a dark corner to reflect and ask God's pardon. When she was sorry, she could come down. Eventually she left the dark corner and reported to her mother.

"Did you ask God to forgive you, Susie?" asked Mom.

"Yes, I did," replied the child.

"What did He say?" asked Mom.

"He said, 'That's funny, Susie, because for a minute I thought it was a lion too.'"

Did you know: It was the custom in ancient Judea to plant a cedar tree when a boy was born and a pine when a girl was born. When a couple married, the canopy used in the wedding ceremony was woven of branches from both trees.

Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.

-- C.S. Lewis in Christian Behaviour

An agent of a tax accounting firm had been phoning the presidents of small companies to invite them to a seminar on taxes. On one call, when he asked to speak with Mr Abbott, the female voice on the other end of the phone asked which Mr Abbott he wanted to speak with. The agent checked his notes and confirmed that it was Mr John Abbott. About three minutes later, the female voice was back on the phone. "I'm sorry," she said, "Mr John Abbott is deceased."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," the agent stammered, "I'm so embarrassed."

"You're embarrassed!" exclaimed the voice on the telephone. "I had him paged!"

Minister to congregation: "We will now repeat the 23rd Psalm, and will the woman who generally gets to the still waters while the rest of us are still in green pastures, kindly wait and go with the crowd."

A man needing to pay for his meal at a restaurant with a cheque tried to establish identity with his driver's license, union card, and two gasoline credit cards. The cashier refused them all, saying, "They don't prove anything. You could have stolen them, you know."

The only other thing he could find in his pockets was a little note which was addressed to him by his church pastor, thanking him for having served one month as a substitute Sunday school teacher. "I'll accept that," said the cashier.

"Why?" asked the man. "For all you know, I could have stolen that too."

"Yeah," said the cashier slowly. "But you wouldn't have."

The passing of a good friend, like the felling of a giant pine, leaves a vacant spot against the sky.

-- Allen R. Foley

The florist shop was in a state of frenzy the day before Mother's Day. The workroom in back bore evidence of the heavy workload - trash-littered floor, overflowing refuse cans, containers of newly arrived flowers. One of the designers noticed a five year old boy surveying the chaotic scene. She smiled at him and said, "Hi, you looking for a job? We need someone to put flowers away, sweep the floor and empty trash."

For a moment, he just stood there, eyes big, taking in every detail. As he ran back to the showroom, he yelled, "Hey, Mom, they need you in there!"

From a United Methodist Bulletin:

"Bring your newspapers (and your neighbours). Put them in paper bags or tie them if possible.

Sign in front of a church at Christmas time: "Stop here for your Holiday Spirits".

A little girl, whose only exposure to saints was seeing them portrayed in the stained glass windows of her church, was asked by her priest during his homily, "What is a saint?"

She pointed to the windows and answered, "They are people the light shines through."

The priest glanced at the windows and then looked solemnly at his congregation. "That is likely as good a description as we'll ever get, or need."

At a baptism in Scotland, a minister holding an infant in his arms at the font realized he'd forgotten the baby's name. He racked his brains in vain. Finally he asked the baby's father, who was standing next to him, and the father whispered, "Spindona."

The minister thought the name a bit odd, but he went ahead and christened the baby Spindona. As he did so, he was surprised to see consternation on the parents' faces. Back in the vestry, the mother burst into tears and the father demanded why the minister had given his daughter such a ridiculous name. "But you said her name was Spindona," protested the minister.

"Ah did not," fumed the father, pointing to a piece of paper attached to the baby's shawl. "Ah tell ye her name's pinned oan her!"

And so it was - Carol Elizabeth.

A nun who taught at a parochial high school had a reputation for perfectionism. During the months preceding the College Board examinations, she administered a battery of practice tests. Many of these mini-exams were multiple choice where the students were asked to look over the possible answers and then "choose one of the above."

From the nun's "choose one of the above" directions, she has earned herself a heavenly nickname. Her students call her affectionately "Nun of the Above".

During a visit to Rome in 1962, Robert Kennedy recorded this incident in a diary: "We had an audience with Pope John XXIII. He blessed us all, including the American newspapermen who were with us, most of whom were not Catholic. He assured them that it was just a little blessing and wouldn't do them any harm."

A small boy sat in church with his mother and listened to a sermon entitled "What is a Christian?". Every time the minister asked the question, he banged his fist on the pulpit.

"Mama, do you know?" the boy whispered to his mother.

"Yes, dear," she replied, "now do be quiet."

Finally, as the minister was drawing his sermon to a close, he again demanded, "What is a Christian?" and banged especially hard on the pulpit. The little boy, by now quite excited, shouted, "Tell him, Mama, tell him!"

A man bought an old, run-down farm and worked hard getting it in good operating condition. One day the local minister stopped by and congratulated the farmer, remarking that it was wonderful what God and man could do when working together.

"Ayeh," allowed the farmer, "p'haps it is. But you should have seen this place when God was running it alone."

Eldest son had been accepted as a member of a travelling wheat harvest crew and was about to leave home to join the crew. Mom and Dad were cautioning him about the machinery he would be using. "Be careful of the belts and chains on the combine," said his father. "Remember, one hand for the wheel, and one for steadying yourself. God only gave you two hands."

Mom added, "Be careful of your feet. Don't let one get caught in an auger or gear. God only gave you two feet."

Dad added, "Wear safety goggles when you're working on machines. God gave you only two eyes." Eldest son finally said in reply, "Yes, and thank God, He gave me only two parents."

Four men of the cloth were chatting about everyday problems. "You know, since all of us are such good friends," said the first, "this might be a good time to discuss some of the things that are disturbing us." They all nodded in agreement.

"Well, I would like to share with you the fact that I drink to excess," said one. There was a gasp from the other three.

Then another spoke up. "Since you were so honest, I'd like to say that my big problem is gambling. It's terrible, I know, but I can't quit. I've even been tempted to take money from the collection plate." Another gasp was heard.

The third clergyman spoke. "I'm really troubled, brothers, because I'm growing fond of a woman in my church - a married woman."

More gasps. But the fourth man remained silent. After a few moments reflection, he looked at his friends. "The fact is," he said, "I just don't know how to tell you about the problem that I have." "It's alright, brother, your secret is safe with us."

"Well. it's this way," he said slowly, "you see, I'm an incurable gossip." Three gasps.

"There is a rule in sailing," explains psychologist Joyce Brothers, "where the more manoeuvrable ship should give way to the less manoeuvrable craft. I think this is sometimes a good rule to follow in human relationships as well."

Some people always sigh in thanking God. -- Elizabeth Barrett Browning

A Presbyterian minister was late driving home from an out-of-town meeting. In haste, he exceeded the speed limit and was stopped and ticketed by a police officer. When he finally got home, his wife greeted him at the door with a big hug. "Oh, darling," she said, "I've been so worried. I prayed and prayed that God would be with you as you drove home."

"You know," replied the minister with a twinkle in his eye, "he was. But I just didn't recognise him in uniform."

The church custodian was cleaning the sanctuary when he found a brown paper bag under one of the pews. He immediately went to the pastor's office and suggested that he would have to cut down on the length of his sermons.

"Why?" asked the pastor, a bit taken aback.

"Look here," the custodian replied as he showed the pastor the bag. "People are starting to bring

their lunches.”

The pastor in a small village in Tennessee was so distressed by the drinking among his flock that he preached a sermon against liquor. “I wish there was no liquor on this earth,” he declared. “I wrote a letter to the President asking him to give me a permit to seize all the stills, get into all the warehouses and gather up all the fruit jars that are filled with the terrible stuff. When I get that permit,” he continued, “I’m going to empty all the whisky kegs and jars, and pour all that liquor into the river. That’s all I’ve got to say. Now for this morning’s hymn.”

The choir leader stepped forward and said, “Let us sing ‘Shall We Gather At The River?’”

A tourist, standing in front of a magnificent church asked, “What are those statues on the roof?” “Beats me,” came the reply. “Wait until five o’clock. If they move then, they’re workmen.”

Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out. - Art Linkletter

The old woman had a huge bottle with her as she passed through Irish customs. “What have you there?” asked the customs officer with suspicion.

“‘Tis water from Lourdes I’m bringing home with me.”

He took the bottle, tried some, and sputtered, “Let me tell you, that’s not Lourdes water. That’s first class French brandy.”

“Lord bless us all,” she said, “It’s a miracle.”

A couple invited some friends to their home to celebrate the wife’s 40th birthday. The week before, the husband had gone out to buy a gift, and he saw some cute little music boxes. A blue one was playing “Happy Birthday To You”. Thinking they were all alike, he picked up a red one and had it gift-wrapped.

At dinner, the husband gave the gift to his wife in front of their friends, and asked her to open it. Out came the tune, “The Old Gray Mare, She Ain’t What She Used To Be.”

One Sunday, a Sunday School teacher asked her class of four-year-olds how many of them said grace before meals. Discovering that not one did, she taught them a simple prayer that they could say before they sat down to eat.

A few weeks later, one of the mothers came in after class to talk with the teacher. “That was a lovely prayer you taught my daughter. But I must say, my husband is getting pretty tired of saying grace every time he opens the refrigerator to get a beer.”

A thunderstorm passed over a town during a band competition being held in the church. When the last band finished playing, one of the judges went to the podium to announce the winner and said, “That was the best band I’ve ever heard!”

Just then, the brightest flash of lightning in years lit up the sky and a simultaneous explosion of

thunder shook the church.

It was a subdued adjudicator who looked upward and said, "Well, ... ah ... um ..., maybe not."

From an English newspaper: "The sudden gust of wind took all who were at the ceremony completely by surprise. Hats were blown off and copies of the vicar's speech and other rubbish were scattered over the site."

The politeness of a guide in India was demonstrated upon his return from accompanying a certain judge on a hunt. "Well, how did the judge do today?" the guide was asked.

"The judge shot beautifully," he answered, "but heaven was very merciful to the birds."

Each Sunday in church, the minister noticed a gray-haired couple who sat holding hands just like newlyweds. Finally he couldn't stand being quiet any longer, and he remarked to the wife how wonderful it was that she and her husband were still so much in love. "Love has nothing to do with it," she replied. "I hold Harold's hands to keep him from cracking his knuckles."

The preacher and his friend had teed off. The friend missed a short putt for his birdie and swore under his breath. At the third hole, he missed another easy putt. "Damn, missed again," he muttered. On the seventh hole, he did it again. "Damn, another miss!" he groaned. The preacher kept giving his friend reproachful glances, but said nothing.

They started out on the back nine. On the tenth hole, the ball just missed the cup. "Damn! missed again!"

"Look!" cried the preacher, "I'm tired of your swearing. If you do it again, I'm going to call on the Lord to strike you."

"Yeah, yeah," thought the friend as he teed off on the eleventh. The rest of his putts were accurate until the last hole, where a two metre putt stopped right at the lip of the cup. "Damn! Damn! Damn! Missed again!"

A huge black cloud formed overhead and rolled around for a few seconds. Then a lightning bolt whizzed down from the sky and zapped the preacher. The friend gaped in amazement as the clouds opened up and disappeared. Then a sepulchral voice came from nowhere: "Damn! Missed again!"

If you wish to make an apple pie truly from scratch, you must first invent the universe.

-- Carl Sagan

Age does not diminish the extreme disappointment of having a scoop of ice cream fall from the cone.

-- Jim Fiebig

Getting married is easy. Staying married is more difficult. Staying happily married for a lifetime should rank among the fine arts.

-- Roberta Flack

From an English newspaper: “The sudden gust of wind took all who were at the ceremony completely by surprise. Hats were blown off and copies of the vicar’s speech and other rubbish were scattered over the site.”

Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best.

When Bill Moyers was special assistant to former president Lyndon Johnson, he was asked to say grace before a meal in the family quarters of the White House. As Moyers began praying softly, the President interrupted him with “Speak up, Bill! Speak up!”

The former Baptist minister from east Texas stopped in mid-sentence and without looking up, replied steadily, “I wasn’t addressing you, Mr President.”

God so loved the world that he didn’t send a committee!

A man and his wife were invited to the Bar Mitzvah of a colleague’s son. They arrived a little late at the synagogue and were seated beside a man who sensed that they were unfamiliar with the service. The man opened a prayer book for them with English on one page and Hebrew on the other, and indicated where the rabbi was reading the text. “These are the Laws of Moses,” he whispered. “The wife nodded, but she must have looked a bit confused, for he repeated “Moses.” She was about to thank him when he nudged her gently with his elbow and said, “Moses, you know, Charlton Heston.”

A reporter covering a coal-mine disaster filed a story that began: “God looked at the grief today in this little West Virginia mining town, and he wept.”

His city editor relayed back new instructions: “Forget the mine cave-in. Interview God.”

The cavalryman was galloping down the road, rushing to catch up with his regiment. Suddenly, his horse stumbled and pitched him to the ground. In the dirt with a broken leg, terrified of the approaching enemy, the soldier called out: “All you saints in heaven, help me get up on my horse!” Then, with a superhuman effort, he leaped on the horse’s back and fell off the other side. Once again on the ground, he called to the heavens: “All right, just half of you this time!”

It is admirable for a man to take his son fishing, but there is a special place in heaven for the father who takes his daughter shopping. -- John Sinor

A confirmation student was asked to list the ten commandments in any order.

He wrote: “3, 6, 1, 8, 4, 5, 9, 2, 10, 7.”

In 1962, the First Lord of The Admiralty, Ian Orr-Ewing, paid a visit to a United States destroyer in Portsmouth Docks. As the Lord's car approached, the passengers heard a voice on the ship's loud speaker announce: "Now hear this! The Lord is approaching!"

From the back seat of the car, a distinguished voice rumbled, "Hallelujah!"

A couple decided to have their children, ranging from five years to newborn, baptised at the same time. Their eldest, a five year old girl, was told about the baptism ritual and what would happen to her. At the church, the little girl announced to the congregation, "Hello, I'm Megan, and I'm here to be advertised so that God knows my name."

A Sunday School teacher asked each of her students to find out what kind of service their parents preformed for the church. The following Saturday, little Johnny went with his mother as she prepared the altar for the next day's Communion. She explained each item's significance, but it wasn't until she took out the wine that Johnny became interested.

Following the service the next day, the teacher asked Johnny's mother just what she had told him she did in the church. "Well, I told him I was on the Altar Guild and had him with me when I prepared the altar."

"I thought so," replied the teacher laughing. "When I asked him what you did in the church, the only thing he would say was, 'My mom sets up the drinks for the congregation!'"

An eminent surgeon went to spend a holiday with his twin brother who had just been installed as the vicar in a country parish. Walking round the village one morning, he met one of his brother's parishioners who congratulated him on his sermon the previous Sunday. "I'm afraid you're mistaken," replied the surgeon, "I'm not the brother who preaches; I'm the one who practices."

On her wedding day, a bride learned that she had an ally in her mother-in-law. The starting time came and went as all the guests waited in the church. One of the ushers went up to the mother-in-law to explain the delay. "They forgot the ring," he whispered.

"That boy," she exclaimed, "He'd forget his head if it wasn't screwed on."

"Oh, no," he corrected her. "It was Kate who forgot the ring."

"That poor dear," the mother-in-law sighed, "She's had so much on her mind!"

On an office wall there is a beautifully decorated bible quotation: "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread." Taped just beneath it someone had written "Pizza Pizza 737-1111".

A music-history professor was lecturing about an early 16th century composer whose work was based on the church year. He interrupted his lecture to ask, "Does anyone know who decided when the seasons of the church year were to start? In other words, who decided when Advent and Lent were to begin?" He looked out into a sea of blank stares. "Anyone?" he asked again.

One brave student raised her hand and ventured, "Hallmark?"

A ghost accidentally backed into a running lawn mower and immediately hurried off to a nearby liquor store for repairs.

Why? Why not? Isn't that where they retail spirits?

A message on the bulletin board of the First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan, just before a big game between Ohio State University and the University of Michigan: "Football is a game. Only the Spiritual is Eternal. Nevertheless, Beat Ohio!"

When Moses and his people got to the Red Sea, he called for Sam, his press agent, and asked, "Where are the boats?"

"Oh, I'm Sorry, Moses," Sam said, "I was so busy with the press releases I forgot to order the boats."

"You idiot!" Moses exclaimed, "What do you want me to do - raise my staff and ask God to part the Red Sea?"

"Hey, Boss," Sam said, "if you can do that, I could get you two pages in the Old Testament."

A little boy was late for Sunday School and the superintendent, seeing him slip in, detained him and asked him the reason. The boy shuffled his feet uncertainly for a moment, then blurted out, "I started out to go fishing instead, but my dad wouldn't let me."

The superintendent beamed broadly. "A wise father," he said. "He was quite right not to let you go fishing on Sunday. Did he explain to you why?"

The little boy nodded, "Oh, yes, sir. He said there wasn't enough bait for both of us."

Politics is a lot like religion. Except in politics, it's your opponent who confesses your sins.

-- Merrill Cook, Salt Lake City Tribune

There was a small town in the bottom of a valley. One day a severe rainstorm struck and the valley was slowly flooded with water. Terrified, the inhabitants of the little town fled to the mountains. One man, the old rabbi refused to flee. The townspeople attempted to persuade him to leave, but he refused saying, "I put my trust in God."

The storm got worse, and as the water reached the knees of the old rabbi, ten strong men came down from the mountain, in a new attempt to save him. "Oh rabbi! " they shouted "Please let us save you!!"

"I put my trust in God!" was the only reply they got. Soon the water had reached the rabbi's shoulders, so only his head was above water. Just then a boat sailed by, and the people in the boat screamed out -"Rabbi, let us help you!"

The rabbi looked at the people in the boat and said "I put my trust in - gargle gargle splot - " and he drowned. As soon as the rabbi was put before God, he pointed his finger at God, and said accusingly, "Why did you not save me, oh Lord? I was your humble servant, and trusted fully in you."

God looked at him, smiled and said, "What more could I do, rabbi, I gave you three chances!"

A catholic, a protestant and a Jewish boy are talking about how they celebrate Christmas. The catholic boy says: "Well, first we go to the church, thank Jesus, praise his name, go home, have dinner, and then we open the presents..." (getting more excited with every step of his description). The protestant boy says: "Some of us go to the church, then we also have dinner, and then we open the presents..." (also getting more and more excited). Finally the Jewish boy says: "First we have dinner and then my father takes me to our toy factory. We look at the empty shelves and thank God for the good friend we have in Jesus."

Preparations for supper were not proceeding as quickly as young Reggie and his guest would have liked. "Mom," he asked, "could we have some hors d'oeuvres?" "Certainly," replied mom, "but I'm afraid I only have crackers and cheese." "Oh, I know," Reggie answered, "but if I'd asked for that you'd have said, 'No snacking before supper!'"

Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant with the weak and the wrong. Sometime in your life you will have been all of these.
-- Dandy Lion, quoted by Bob Goddard.

Zinger Warning!

A man named Thompson owned a moderately-prosperous nail company. He wanted to advertise his nails, so he hired an advertising company to make a television commercial. One night, Thompson is watching TV when he sees a picture of Christ, nailed to the cross. Emblazoned above him, in letters of fire, are the words, 'Thompson Nails'.

Horried, Thompson angrily phones the ad agency, but is assured they will take care of it. The next night, he's watching television and sees a little cartoon figure of Jesus run across the screen. He's followed by two Roman soldiers, carrying hammers. One soldier turns to the other and says, "I told you we should have used Thompson Nails."

Joseph and Mary are wandering around heaven for almost twenty centuries, and they have become bored. They agree that they should go back to earth for a little vacation. Joseph suggests that they go to the Bahamas? Mary disagrees; they'd already visited there, and she feels it is too hot there this time of year. Joseph suggests Cancun, but Mary reminds him that they've also been there and she feels that it would be too crowded this time of year. Joseph suggests a visit to Lourdes, France. Mary says, "That sounds like fun to me, I've never been there before!"

There was a politician who was guilty of wasting taxpayers money because he was regularly sneaking out to play golf despite his superior's orders to the contrary. One day when he had slipped away to play golf at public expense, God and Saint Peter watched him and discussed his dishonesty. They decided that he needed to be taught a lesson he would never forget. God said to Peter, "Watch this!" The guy teed off at the 15th hole - a 400 yard par 5. The ball soared high into the sky, bounced once on the green, and dropped into the cup. A hole in one!!

Saint Peter asked “You just gave him the golf shot of his life. Why?”
With a mischievous smile, God replied, “ Who’s he going to be able to tell?”

Two workmen of a given religion are standing outside a brothel, they see various TV preachers, priests of other religions going in, each is greeted with a call of “You disgusting pervert” etc. Then along comes a priest/rabbi/guru of their religion and enters the brothel. One worker says “Oh one of the poor girls must be ill...”

God and Jesus were playing golf one day. They got to the seventh hole, and there was a huge water trap in between the tee and the green. God says to Jesus that he is going to take the safe way around the water trap, even if it means that he will need extra shots.

Jesus just laughs and says he’s going to aim straight for the green.

God says, “You’re not good enough to get over that water trap to the green!”.

Jesus says, “If Jack Nicholas can do it, I can do it”.

Well, God tees off, and heads off around the side of the water trap. When he’s around the other side, Jesus tees off and the ball goes straight into the water trap. So Jesus just walks across the water trap and picks up the ball.

Some other golfers, standing near God and not recognising him, are really surprised and ask God, “Who does he think he is? Jesus?”.

And God says, “No, Jack Nicholas”.

St. Peter was at the Pearly Gates to welcome two distinguished newcomers. The famous lawyer was shown to a sumptuous suite, beautifully furnished, with a fine library and valuable paintings. The Pope was shown to his quarters, a sparse cell, chilly and bare. “Hey,” said the Pope, “how come the lawyer’s place is finer than mine?”

“It’s like this,” said St. Peter. “We already have more than one hundred popes; he’s our first lawyer.

Q. What was the first mention of the High jump in the bible?

A. When Jesus cleared the temple

Q. What was the first mention of cars in the bible?

A. When Moses came down from the mount in a Triumph

Q. What was the first mention of sex in the bible?

A. When Jesus got laid in the tomb

Long ago, in a small village in Europe, one family had for centuries made all the bells for the churches. Finally, only one member of the bell-making family was left, and he was also the mayor. Threatened by competition, he decreed that no wedding bells might be rung in the village unless they were of his manufacture. He enforced this rule strictly and became known as the wedding-bell czar.

One couple decided to marry without using the czar's bells. They had a friend who owned an ancient Chinese gong, and they used it as a bell substitute.

Shortly after the wedding, a fearsome noise came from the gong-owner's home. Bride and groom rushed to investigate. "Whatever does that noise mean?" they cried.

"It means," said the friend, wringing his hands, "the wedding-bell czar's breaking up that old gong of mine."

Two fellows opened a butcher shop and prospered. Then an evangelist came to town and one of the butchers was saved. He tried to persuade his partner to accept salvation also, but to no avail. "Why won't you, Charlie?" asked the born-again fellow.

"Listen, Lester," the other butcher said. "If I get religion too, who's going to weigh the meat?"

Three ministers went to dinner together and discovered that all of their churches had bat-infestation problems. "I got so mad," said one, "that I got a shotgun and fired at them. The ceiling was badly damaged, and I didn't even hit one bat."

"I tried trapping them alive," said the second. "Then I drove 80 kilometres away before I released them, but they beat me back to the church!"

The third minister smiled and said, "I haven't had any more problems."

"What did you do?" asked the others, amazed.

"I simply baptized and confirmed them all," he replied, "and I haven't seen them since."

Why do we say we're lucky when it's a beautiful summer day, and yet call a hurricane an "Act of God?"

A priest, driving in an unfamiliar city, made an illegal turn and he was promptly pulled over by a police cruiser. The officer walked up, ticket pad in hand, but after listening to the priest's explanation of the error, the officer put away the pad and said, "Reverend, I've been wanting to say this to a clergyman for a long time - my son, go and sin no more."

It was a little known fact that the new minister enjoyed an occasional bottle of wine. One church member, aware of this, presented the clergyman with a bottle of Bordeaux. But the gift has a string attached. The minister would have to say thank you from the pulpit.

At the conclusion of the next service, the minister made the announcements, and then said, "And I want to thank my friend for giving the fine fruit, and for the spirit in which it was given."

A supply teacher was being married on the weekend, and the vice principal made an announcement over the intercom: "The staff and students would like to congratulate Mr. Green on his forthcoming marriage." When the vice principal saw Mr Green in the hall after school, the teacher thanked him for the special attention, but added that he thought the grade five students he had been teaching needed more language instruction. After hearing the announcement, one of the students had asked Mr Green if he had really been married three times before.

In the big city hotel lobby, a hillbilly and his son were observing an elevator for the first time. A heavy old lady entered, and the doors closed. A couple of minutes later, the doors opened, and a beautiful young woman exited the same car. "Boy", said the hillbilly excitedly, "Go get your ma!"

Casey went to confession. "Father, I've sinned. I used the Lord's name in vain while playing golf." "I understand, my son," said the priest. "I often play the game myself. What happened?"

"It was the thirteenth hole. I teed off, hit the ball 240 yards right down the middle, but it bounced off a sprinkler head into the woods."

"Is that when you swore?"

"No, Father. I hit a terrific shot out of the rough, but it landed deep in a sand trap."

"Ah, that's when you took the Lord's name in vain."

"No," said Casey. "I hit the ball perfectly out of the trap, and it ended up just four inches from the cup."

"Is that when you blasphemed?" asked the priest.

"No ..."

"Dear God! Don't tell me you missed a four inch putt!"

Several ladies were enjoying their weekly get-together to play cards. Their conversation involved great moments from past vacation trips. The first lady told of a quiet vacation at her cottage - a great rest, and no excitement at all. Others told of trips to western Canada, the United States, Mexico, and one described her trip to Japan. Eventually, the first lady was able to get back in the conversation. She knew that the ladies were embellishing the details of their vacation almost beyond recognition, so she decided that, just this once, she would fabricate an experience that would compete with her friends stories.

She began to tell of her "Italian vacation", Venice, Rome, the famous fountains, the Vatican, and her greatest moment of all ... when she paid a social call on the Pope. The other ladies were spellbound, hanging on every word, dripping with envy. The great vacation screeched to a halt as the lady related, "His Holiness is a marvellous man, such a treat to listen to; such a contrast to his wife - I didn't like her at all!"

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

-- Henry Ford.

Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand. Anyone may gather it, and no limit is set.

-- Mother Teresa, quoted by Malcolm Muggeridge in "Something Beautiful for God".

What is a Canadian? I'll tell you.

Some say, "Cast your bread upon the water, and it will be returned to you one hundredfold." A Canadian says, "What am I going to do with a hundred loaves of wet bread?" Yet if you tell a

Canadian he's apathetic, he'll answer, "Who cares?"

-- Dave Broadfoot

Jesus was walking through the hospital and came upon a blind man. He touched his forehead and said, "Have faith my son, close your eyes, and when you open them, you will see." The man did as he was told and his sight was restored. He praised Jesus and kissed HIS hand and went away. There was a lame man. Jesus touched his shoulder, telling him to "Throw away your crutches, have faith, and you will walk." The man did as he was told, and could walk perfectly. He praised Jesus, kissed His hand, and walked away.

As Jesus walked on through the ward, He saw a man peeking out from under his covers, looking at Jesus. Jesus went to talk to the man, but the man pulled the covers over his head. Jesus asked, "What is wrong my son?" To which the man replied, "Buzz off! I'm on compensation!"

Two buddies met in heaven. Clarence asked Warren how he had died.

"Froze to death," he said.

Then Clarence told his story: "I was at work one day when I was told that my wife was cheating on me. I rushed home, searched every corner, every cupboard, under the beds, in closets, everywhere - but I couldn't find anybody. I got myself so worked up that I had a heart attack and died."

"Too bad you didn't look in the freezer," Warren moaned, "then we'd both be alive today!"

A Roman Catholic priest, who worked with a cardinal in Europe, returned home to Canada for a vacation with his family and friends. The nature of his job had him speaking with many people during his working day, and he expressed to family members his hope that on his return trip, he would not be seated next to someone who wanted to talk a lot. His brother suggested that he claim he was an insurance salesman.

His sister replied, "Oh, no, he shouldn't lie. He should say that he is an afterlife insurance salesman!"

A prayer spoken by an old mountain man that might apply to all of us, flatlanders and hill people alike, goes this way:

"Lord, I don't ask for a faith that would move yonder mountain. I can take enough dynamite and move it, if it needs movin'. I pray, Lord, for enough faith to move me."

Balzer's Law: Life is what happens while you are making other plans.

-- Robert Balzer

Overheard in a supermarket: "First I gave up meat for Lent. Now I'm giving it up for rent."

The town handyman was fond of his liquor. One Sunday morning, he entered the local church while the choir was singing, and shouted, "Stop! Play something I can sing!" He was hustled out and charged with disturbing the peace.

A couple of days later, he was up before the magistrate, who had employed him from time to time.

After hearing the case, the magistrate said, "I am forced to fine you ten dollars or ten days in jail." The handyman protested that he didn't have the money. The magistrate thought a moment and concluded, "Then I will pay the fine, as I have often wanted to do the same thing myself!"

On a Jewish holy day, Grandma decided to treat the family to loaves of homemade challah, the Jewish ceremonial bread. The taste and aroma were an experience of which memories are made. Finally, someone stopped eating long enough to say, "Grandma, I hope you made some of this delicious challah for yourself."

"No," responded the yiddish grandma. "But I did use some of the dough to make pizza for my lunch."

An expectant father paced nervously in the waiting room. Suddenly, the door flew open and a nurse announced, "Mr Smith, you're the father of a baby boy." She hurried back to the delivery room only to return a few minutes later, saying "Congratulations! You've another baby boy." Within a few moments, she was back again saying, "Mr Smith, you're the father of triplets."

As the nurse turned to re-enter the delivery room, the trembling father followed in hot pursuit.. At the door she said, "Oh, Mr Smith, you can't come in here - you're not sterile."

His retort as he brushed past her: "Lady, that's the understatement of the year!"

Some time ago, Joe Michel was invited to lecture at the University of Cairo. Because of an impending airline strike, reservations for the professor and his wife, Mary, were exceedingly difficult to obtain. Travel agents assured them that everything possible was being done. Two days before the departure date, they received their confirmation. Amid laughter, their travel agent read the confirmation to them word for word. In later years they often thought of the airline employee who had wired: "Flight into Egypt for Joseph and Mary confirmed."

A group of children got their fathers to get together to help them build a large skating rink on a vacant lot. As the rink neared completion, the kids were discussing what each father was contributing to the project. One said his father supplied the boards. Another's father levelled the ground. Another father was looking after the flooding, another supplied the hose. When the last boy was asked what his father was doing to help out, there was a moment of uneasy silence. Then, with a dignity far surpassing his years, the son of the minister replied, "My father is going to bless it."

Two women met for the first time since graduating from high school. Asked the first one, "Have you managed to live a well planned life?"

"Oh, yes," said her friend. "First I married a millionaire, then an actor. My third marriage was to a preacher, and now I'm married to an undertaker."

"What do all those marriages have to do with a well planned life?"

"One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, and four to go."

The new minister's sermons were so dull that the congregation decided that they would give him

his notice. The minister pleaded for one more chance. "See what you think of my sermon next Sunday," he said. "If you're not satisfied, I'll leave."

To everyone's surprise, the sermon the following Sunday was inspiring. The congregation voted not only to retain the pastor but also to increase his salary. A church leader said to him, "That was the finest sermon I've ever heard. But there's just one thing I couldn't figure out - just as you were about to speak, you raised two fingers of your left hand, and just after you spoke, you raised two fingers of your right hand. Was there a significance to those gestures?"

"Yes," answered the minister, "those were the quotation marks."

The hospital chaplain always carried a pocket pager as he made his rounds. He was visiting two women patients, who asked him to pray with them. Just as he intoned "Dear Lord," the gadget in his pocket went "beep, beep, beep".

The women smiled, and one observed, "I've never known a pastor with such direct contact."

Father and son, both ministers, attended a Dallas Cowboys Championship football game. When the announcer said the crowd was well over sixty thousand fans, the son asked his father if he wouldn't like to be able to speak to a crowd this size. "Nope," replied his dad, "but I sure wouldn't mind passing the plate."

A young couple, expecting their first child, grew concerned about their finances and drastically curtailed their expenses. One evening, at a bible study group, the wife inadvertently revealed her preoccupation with the family budget. They were listening to a lesson on Abraham's faith in God and how, at the amazing age of ninety plus, he and Sarah were blessed with a child. To the delight of the rest of the class, the mother-to-be blurted out, "They waited until they could afford it!"

A secretary was addressing and stamping envelopes when she ran out of stamps. "I have some in here," said one of her co-workers, as she reached into her desk and pulled out a bible.

"Now that just goes to show," joked the secretary, "that if you need help, turn to the bible."

The co-worker smiled and said, "I also keep my petty cash in here. It's a good place to hide things. The ones who do open the bible wouldn't steal from it, and the ones who would steal never open it."

"Do you believe in life after death?" the boss asked one of his younger employees.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then, that makes everything just fine," his boss went on. "About an hour after you left to go to your grandfather's funeral, he stopped in to see you."

The pastor was shocked when he learned that one of his congregation had just made his first parachute jump with a skydivers club. He scolded the young man for doing such a crazy thing.

"But," said the youth, "I'm so close to heaven up there."

"Yes," the pastor replied, "but you're going the wrong way!"

Two women were discussing their upcoming class reunion. There was a question about one member. One woman had heard that he had passed away, but the other wasn't sure. "Shall we list him with the deceased class members?" asked the skeptic. "What if we're wrong?"

"But I'm sure I saw an article in the paper about his death," replied the other.

"What if we put him on the deceased list and then he showed up at the dinner?"

"Well, we could always give him the prize for coming the longest distance."

A conference at an Episcopal cathedral was brainstorming a new name for the diocesan newspaper. They wanted something with a serious side, befitting a church publication, yet with a light touch. One young woman's inspiration was "Prayboy".

A visiting bishop at Yale University spoke on the four letters "Y-A-L-E." He held forth for ten minutes on "Y" for "Youth", but the audience in the chapel was unimpressed. He carried on for seven minutes and eight seconds on "A" for "Ambition", four minutes and ten seconds on "L" for "Loyalty", by which time the audience was about to break up. He covered "E" for "Energy" in three minutes and ten seconds. As he was leaving, he came upon a young student still on bended knee in the rearmost pew. When the student rose, the bishop asked, "Young man, what was it I said that moved you so deeply?"

The student replied, "I was just offering thanks that I go to Yale rather than the Massachusetts Institute of Technology."

When their son first left home for university, his parents gave him a Bible, assuring him that it would be a great help. Later, as he began sending letters home requesting more money, they would write back telling him to read his Bible, citing chapter and verse. He would reply that he was reading the Bible - but he still needed money.

When he came home for a semester break, his parents told him they knew he had not been reading his bible.

How? They had tucked ten and twenty dollar bills by the verses they had cited in their letters.

Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy.

-- Howard W. Newton

A minister was matching coins with a member of his congregation for a cup of coffee. When asked if that didn't constitute gambling, the minister replied, "It is merely a scientific method of determining just who is going to commit an act of charity."

You don't marry one person, you marry three of them - the person you think they are, the person they are, and the person they are going to become as a result of being married to you. -- Richard Needham

Annoyed with the excessive length of the pastor's sermons, and elderly gent commented, "People

may not be a great deal wiser after one of his sermons, but they are always a great deal older!"

A bride-to-be attended a church wedding where a number of babies and small children caused quite a commotion. "I certainly am not going to put up with that sort of thing at my wedding," she remarked to a friend. Several months later she sent out her wedding invitations. Noted at the bottom was the following: "No Babies Expected."

Years ago, when Pope John Paul II visited the United States, millions of families gathered around their TV sets to witness his arrival. As they watched the Pontiff step off the plane and symbolically kiss the ground, one eighty year old lady confided to her family, "I know just how he feels. I hate to fly, too."

An old miser called his doctor, his lawyer, and his minister to his deathbed. "They say that you can't take it with you," the dying man said, "but I'm going to try. I've got three envelopes with \$30,000 cash in each one. I want each of you to take an envelope, and just when they lower my casket, you throw in the envelopes."

At the funeral, each man tossed in his envelope. On the way home, the minister confessed, "I needed money for the church, so I took out \$10,000 and threw only \$20,000 into the grave."

The doctor said, "I, too, must confess. I'm building a clinic. I took out \$20,000 and threw in only \$10,000."

The lawyer said, "Gentlemen, I'm ashamed of both of you. I threw in a cheque for the full amount."

During a rainy rush hour, a jam-packed bus continued to pick up passengers at every stop. "Move back," the driver repeatedly growled. "These people want to get out of the rain, too." Finally, there was a plaintive cry from a crushed passenger in the rear of the bus. "Mister," he said, "this is only a bus you've got. It ain't Noah's Ark."

Little things console us because little things afflict us.

--Blaise Pascal

The minister had been summoned to the church for what he had been told was an emergency council meeting, but it was actually a surprise party celebrating the birth of his first child. Lookouts were posted outside and were told to notify those inside when they saw the minister's car approaching. The party was a success, and the organizers congratulated themselves for a well executed plan. The minister was asked if he had suspected anything. "I knew something was up when I pulled into the parking lot," he grinned. "That's the first time I've ever seen grown men running into church."

The ultimate test of whether you possess a sense of humour is your reaction when someone tells you don't.

-- Frank Tyger

A police officer was aroused early one Christmas morning by a burglar alarm. He was dressed and on his way when he realized that he had forgotten his police portable radio at his bedside. En route

to the scene, he hit a patch of ice and his car spun into a deep snowbank. He radioed his dispatcher, and in keeping with the season, he reported that he had swerved to avoid what appeared to be a sleigh drawn by eight reindeer. An hour later, he returned home and was met by his seven year old daughter. She had been awake, listening to the police calls on the portable radio he had left behind. The look of awe and wonder in her eyes as she hugged him were explained when she cried, "Daddy, you saved Santa!"

The authority to perform civil-marriage ceremonies came with Laura's appointment as a judge. While watching television with her husband and eight year old son, she casually remarked that a law-school classmate was about to get married. "He called today and wants me to marry him. What do you think?"

"Sounds good to me," her husband replied.

When his mother left the room, her son turned to his father. "Dad," he asked anxiously, "if Mom marries that guy, what are you going to do?"

Miss Sweet Potato Pie, the local beauty queen, was seated in the front row of the church balcony. Suddenly, she felt very dizzy. Just as the minister began the blessing, she stood up, lost her balance, and pitched over the railing. When her dress caught on the rail, she found herself hanging over the heads of the praying congregation. Before the congregation could look up, the minister intoned, "If you turn to stare at this damsel in distress, God will strike you blind."

One worshipper nudged his friend and whispered, "I believe I'll risk one eye."

Not wishing to alert potential burglars to an empty house, a busy clergyman installed a telephone answering machine. He recorded a message one evening, with a suitable background noise: "Sorry, we're unable to take your call as we are having a party." Unfortunately, this tape was left in the machine when he went on a holiday. On his return, he found a representative from Alcoholics Anonymous on the doorstep, sent by the bishop who had been trying to contact him for the past week.

The Reverend William L. Lear loves to tell of an incident that really happened back in the 1970's: Toward the close of a banquet held during an Episcopal Church convention some years ago, the bishop of the diocese stood up and quite disrupted the entire affair by announcing, "We will reserve the entertainment of the evening until the waitresses have taken everything off."

After the birth of his son, a police officer went to the airport to pick up his wife's family on the midnight flight. Still in uniform, the police officer met one of the airport security officers. Thinking he was going on a prisoner escort, the security officer asked if the policeman needed the use of the security office. "No," answered the policeman, "I'm not here to pick up outlaws, just in-laws."

A group of young adults were playing baseball. Heather was pitching to Simon. She threw an outside curve, and he turned it into a line drive straight back at the pitcher's mound and Heather

caught it on her chin. Four stitches and three years later, at Heather and Simon's wedding, Heather's mother explained to the audience how that incident led to their marriage. "It's family policy," she declared. "You break it, you buy it!"

Golfer: "What's your handicap?"

2nd golfer: "Honesty."

Nothing can make rain seem wetter than a Sunday afternoon. -- Dan Bennett

Bert was touring Europe, and visiting many of the greatest cathedrals. He first noticed them in Rome - a golden telephone mounted on a great marble column. He asked a priest about it, and he was told that it was a direct line to heaven, and if he'd like to call, it would be a thousand dollars. Bert was amazed, but he declined the offer.

Throughout Europe, he kept seeing the golden phones, and whenever he asked, the answer was the same - a direct line to heaven that he could use of a thousand dollars.

He finished his tour in Ireland. He attended a mass in a local village church, and just inside the door, he found a golden telephone with a sign stating, "Direct Line to Heaven 25 cents."

"Father," asked Bert, "I've been all over Europe in the greatest of cathedrals, and I've seen many phones like this, but the price was always a thousand dollars. Why is this one only 25 cents?"

The priest smiled and said, "Son, you're in Ireland now. It's a local call."

The inter-denominational committee was to attend an out-of-town meeting. A catholic lady, on her way to the meeting, stopped to pick up her protestant colleague, a minister, at his home. When she rang the front doorbell, his five boys raced from various rooms of the parsonage to open the door. The minister arrived just in time to see the look of shock and amazement on her face. "I'm sorry," she blurted out, "it just never occurred to me that you were that kind of Father."

A loan officer needs a customer information file in order to determine whether to proceed with a requested loan. The young man she was interviewing didn't have a file on her system, so she told him that she would need some personal information. She entered the data into her computer and saved his new file. "There," she said, "I've just created you."

His wife looked up with a serious expression. "See, dear," she said to her husband, "I always told you God was a woman."

Definition of a weed: A plant who's virtues have not yet been discovered. -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

A man called his mother to say that the lens-implant surgery in his sightless eye had failed, but it was to be redone. The following day, he called to say the surgery had been successful. Months later, his mother learned that eye doctor always asked his patients, prior to surgery, if they would like him to pray with them. Curious, she asked her son if the doctor had asked him if he wanted to pray. The

son replied that he did, but offered nothing more. “Did you say yes?” she prodded. Silence. Slowly, a sheepish grin spread across his face. “The first time, no; the second time, yes”.

Pope John XXIII was once asked how many people worked at the Vatican. “Half of them,” he said.

At the end of a wedding ceremony, an elderly man turned to a young couple in the pew behind him and requested directions to the community centre. “I think the reception is at the Ivanhoe, sir,” replied the young man. The elderly man took his invitation from his pocket and showed it to the young man, who then gave him directions to the community centre.

When they were out of earshot, the young man’s girlfriend asked why he had directed the man to the community centre. “He was at the wrong wedding,” he replied. “I thought he should at least make it to the right reception.”

A soloist was to sing before the sermon. As he stepped up onto a riser, he stumbled, and caught himself on the railing. The minister seemed to find the incident highly amusing. The congregation understood why when the soloist began to sing “Saviour if my feet have faltered.”

Church note in the Grand Haven, Michigan, Tribune: “First Church of Christ Scientist. 11 a.m. Sunday service. Subject: Can’t make it out - such writing.”

An economist went for a Sunday afternoon walk and met God. He remembered that as a little boy, he had been told that what was a thousand years to us is but a minute to the Lord. And he asked Him, “Lord, is that so?”

The Lord said, “Yes, this is quite so.”

“Then perhaps it may also be true that what is a million dollars to us is only a penny to You,” said the economist.

And the Lord replied, “Yes, that also is quite true.”

The economist then said, “Well, Lord, give me one of those pennies.”

And the Lord said, “Certainly, my dear chap. I don’t happen to have one on me, but wait a minute while I fetch it.”

On his way to a funeral in a rented, chauffeur driven car, a man leaned forward and tapped the driver on the shoulder to ask him a question. The driver jumped, and the passenger apologised for startling him. “That’s all right, sir,” the driver replied. “It’s just that I usually drive the hearse.”

At the first service of the fall season, the rector drew attention to three new air-circulation fans high in the nave of the church. He told the congregation that they had been installed at some expense to help cut fuel costs during the winter, when the temperature near the roof is frequently higher than at floor level. “Hitherto we have relied on the flow of hot air from the pulpit to even out this phenomenon,” the rector continued, much to the evident delight of the parishioners. “But this is no

longer sufficient - even though the churchwardens find the cost of clergy is not increasing as fast as the cost of energy!"

An American priest serving in an Irish village was startled one Saturday evening when a nervous penitent confessed that he had been making poteen. Ignorant of the nature of poteen (an illegal Irish whiskey) and the savage ecclesiastical penalties attached to its making, the American did his best to offer assurances that in all the lists and catalogues and encyclopaedias compiled by learned theologians there was never such a sin. But the more he pooh pooh'd the offense, the more desperate his penitent became till at last he was soothed with a sonorous absolution and a suitably imposing penance.

Still puzzled, however, the American drove over the following day to discuss the situation with an old parish priest. "Canon", he said, "if someone's been making poteen, what should I give him?" "Not a penny more than three and ninepence," said the wise old man. And that's all there was to it.

Adlai's Axiom: "He who slings mud often loses ground."

-- Adlai Stevenson

A lawyer of short stature arrived in court with a bulging briefcase. The lawyer for the other party was a Goliath of a man who, when he caught sight of his opponent, cried out across the court room, "Well, little man, what have you got in that briefcase?"

Without looking up, the short lawyer replied, "Five smooth stones."

A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou has shot the weekly food budget.

Hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil - and you'll never get to be a Six O'clock TV News anchor.

What the heart knows today, the head will understand tomorrow.

James Stephens, The Crock of Gold.

Found in a church bulletin: Don't let worry kill you -- let the church help.

Found in a church bulletin: Thursday night -- Potluck Supper. Prayers and medication to follow.

Found in a church bulletin: Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

Found in a church bulletin: For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Found in a church bulletin: The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev. and Mrs Julius Belzer.

Found in a church bulletin: This afternoon there will be meetings in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.

In Italy they make a distinguished white wine called Lacrima Christi (the Tears of Christ). Rumour has it that a famous German wine expert, visiting Italy to taste the local produce, took one sip, fell to his knees, and exclaimed "O Lord, why did you not weep in Germany?"

Found in a church bulletin: Wednesday the ladies group will meet. Mrs Johnson will sing "Put Me in my Little Bed" accompanied by the pastor.

Found in a church bulletin: Tuesday at 4:00 pm there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.

Found in a church bulletin: Thursday at 5:00 pm there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All ladies wishing to be "Little Mothers" will meet with the pastor in his study.

Found in a church bulletin: This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

A gent who had been at a late party on Saturday night managed to get to church with his wife on Sunday morning. The dull sermon was too much for him; he fell asleep, and began to snore. The minister found himself unable to compete with the racket, and sharply demanded of the man's wife, "Madam, wake up your husband!"

The woman replied, equally sharply, "Wake him yourself. You put him to sleep!"

The Ontario Farmer, December 19, 1995 issue carried this story in Jennifer Walker's column: Kelly Maloney, of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, fondly remembers something her dad used to do for his children when they were little. Having grown up on a dairy farm, Maloney says she and her siblings used to leave hay out for Santa's reindeer. In the middle of the night, after the kids were asleep, she says her father used to bring one of the cows out of the barn and have it eat all the hay. Then he'd walk it around a little so that the kids would see the hoof prints in the snow and think the tracks had been made by Santa's reindeer. "We were naive and young enough to believe it, I guess," says Maloney. And she adds that the memory of her dad going out in the middle of the night

to do that for his kids still holds a special place in her heart.

Sign in front of a Gloucester Ontario church: "Jesus is God's WordPerfect."

The Alexander family moved from the Methodist Church to the Episcopal Church. The rector asked one of their children, eight-year-old Wendy, why the family had changed churches. "I believe," said the little girl, "that my mother likes the Episcopal lethargy better."

A church group had organized a workshop on "Raising Your Self-Esteem." Signs were made to direct participants to the correct meeting room. As one organizer taped a notice to the front door of the church, a second organizer stopped him. "Is that sign really appropriate?" she asked. It read, "Self Esteem Workshop Registrants Use Back Door".

An Anglican lady phoned her minister one evening very distraught over the death of her cat, her companion for 20 years. She asked the rector if she could have it buried in the church cemetery. He said "We cannot perform that sort of service for an animal, but maybe if you contacted the Catholics, they usually can help out with that sort of thing."

The lady asked "Do you think that \$500.00 will cover the costs."

The rector replied "You didn't tell me that your cat was an Anglican".

A man in a small town turned 100, and a reporter went to his house to get a story for the local paper. After a brief biography, the reporter asked the vaunted question, "to what do you attribute your long life?"

"Moderation," said the man. "I never drink or smoke, I never swear, and I try not to lose my temper."

Just then, a terrible crashing came from the next room, followed by a barrage of curses. "What's that?" cried the startled reporter, leaping to his feet.

"Oh, that," said the other, annoyed. "That's my father. He's always like that when he's drunk."

During a Papal audience, a business man approached the Pope and made this offer: Change a line of the Lord's Prayer from "give us this day our daily bread" to "give us this day our daily chicken." and KFC will donate 10 million dollars to Catholic charities. The Pope declined.

Two weeks later the man approached the Pope again. This time with a 50 million dollar offer for the change. Again the Pope declined.

A month later the man offers 100 million, this time the Pope accepted.

At a meeting of the Cardinals, the Pope announced his decision in the good news/bad news format. "The good news is ...that we have 100 million dollars for charities. The bad news is that we lost the Wonder Bread account."

A man finally realized his dream of being a gentleman farmer when he purchased a small farm and

two cows. His wife soon discovered that she had a lot to learn about farm life. One Sunday in church, a lady from the community introduced herself and asked the farmer's wife if she was the one with the little brown heifer in her yard. "Oh, no," she replied. "I drive a little red Honda."

DO IT ANYWAY

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centred.

Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.

Do Good anyway.

If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest people with the biggest ideas can be shot down with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

People favour the underdogs but follow only top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.

Help them anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway

A pastor had a parrot that he taught to quote from the Good Book. Every day, as long as it was awake, the bird would mutter scripture. One day a parishioner found another parrot in a local shop that would squawk "Hello sailor! Wanna kiss?" For a laugh, he bought the parrot and arranged with the pastor to see what would happen when the two birds were put together. The two were introduced in the pastor's living room. The parishioner's parrot flapped its wings and said: "Hello sailor! Wanna kiss?"

"Praise the Lord," replied the pastor's parrot, wildly jumping up and down on his perch, "my prayers have been answered!"

The late Pope is met by St. Peter at the gates of Heaven and is told that because he lived such a good and holy life on earth he has free reign of Heaven, and can go and wander as he wishes.

The Pope immediately instructs St. Peter to bring him to the libraries. As they enter the building the Pope asks to see the original transcripts of all communications between the Angels and the prophets. He starts reading, and all of a sudden screams out "THERE'S AN 'R'! THERE'S AN 'R'! It says 'CELEBRATE'!"

Memory is a complicated thing, a relative to truth but not its twin.

-- Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal Dreams*

After his loss in the Quebec referendum, and the untimely comments made under the influence of alcohol, Quebec Premier M. Parizeau was quite upset with himself. As a result of that incident, the press seemed to be united against him. He did the only thing he could - he prayed for a miracle. He received a message from above that told him: "Call a press conference for tomorrow morning at Montreal harbour. You will receive further instructions at that time".

He called the press conference at the harbour at noon. As hundreds of reporters waited for him to speak, heard a voice saying: "Just take a walk on the water". He was scared at first, but obeyed, and Lo, he walked across the surface of the harbour.

The following day, all the headlines read "M. Parizeau can't swim".

That's when he decided to resign.

A teenager asked his father for permission to get his driver's licence. Dad agreed with a condition - the youth would have to get his long hair cut before taking the car on his own. The son reluctantly agreed, and in due time got his licence, but not his haircut. One night, he requested the car for a party, but dad insisted on that haircut first. The teen tried everything to change dad's mind - the humiliation of facing his peers; he'd look like a nerd; his new girlfriend won't take him seriously; ... all to no avail. His father was a minister, so the youth tried a religious twist. "Gee dad, is long hair really that bad? After all, we know that Jesus Christ had long hair."

Dad grinned wryly. "Yes, that's true my son. But you must also know that Jesus walked everywhere that he went."

A Christian in ancient Rome was being pursued by a lion. He ran through the city streets and into the woods, dodging back and forth among the trees. Finally it became obvious that it was hopeless - the lion was going to catch him. So he turned suddenly, faced the beast and dropped to his knees. "Lord," he prayed desperately, "make this lion a Christian."

Instantly, the lion dropped to his knees and prayed, "For this meal of which I am about to partake ..."

A young girl found a tooth that her kitten had lost. She and her sister decided that they could put one over on the tooth fairy. That night, the girl placed the tooth under her pillow. And it worked. But the tooth fairy left a can of sardines.

His four children often seemed to talk at once, and their father, a minister, complains frequently to his wife that he is constantly being interrupted. On the way to church one Sunday, it was happening again, and the frustrated minister commented to his wife, "That's why I preach. It's the only time I get to talk without being interrupted."

Determined to "take it with him" when he died, a very rich man prayed until finally the Lord gave in. There was one condition: he could take only one suitcase of his wealth. The rich man decided

to fill the case with gold bullion.

The day came when God called him home. Saint Peter greeted him, but told him he couldn't bring his suitcase. "Oh, but I have an agreement with God," the man explained.

"That's unusual," said Saint Peter. "Mind if I take a look?" The man opened the suitcase to reveal the shining gold bullion. Saint Peter was amazed. "Why in the world would you bring pavement?"

An impassioned minister was visiting a country church and began his address with a stirring reminder: "Everybody in this parish is going to die." The evangelist was discomfited to notice a man in the front pew who was smiling broadly. "Why are you so amused?" he asked.

"Because I'm not in this parish," replied the man. "I'm just visiting my sister for the week-end."

Announcing a choir festival, a Truro, Nova Scotia church bulletin stated that the program would "be followed by a massage by the minister".

The Sunday before Christmas, the teacher asked her Sunday school students at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church to draw a picture of the Holy Family.

When the pictures were handed in, she saw that some of the youngsters had drawn the conventional pictures - the Holy Family in the manger, the Holy Family riding on the mule, and so forth.

But she was confused by the drawing made by little Joshua, so she called him up and asked him to explain his picture, which showed an aeroplane with four heads sticking out of the plane windows. She said, "I can understand why you draw three of the heads to show Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. But who's the fourth head?"

"Oh," answered Joshua, "that's Pontius the Pilot!"

Harry's boss was an overbearing taskmaster, driving his employees to exhaustion. In the middle of a big project, Harry had a heart attack and died. The boss visited a medium to see if he could contact Harry's spirit. "You may be able to speak to him now," said the medium.

"Hey, Harry, how's it going there?" shouted the boss.

"It beats the office," Harry answered.

A bit miffed by his response, the boss asked, "Can you see from heaven where you left the Wilson cost study?"

"Heaven," replied Harry, "Who says I'm in heaven?"

Sitting by the window in her convent, Sister Eulalia opened a letter from home and found a ten dollar bill inside. As she read the letter, she caught sight of a shabbily dressed stranger leaning against a lamp post below. Quickly she found a piece of paper, wrote "Don't despair, Sister Eulalia" on it and dropped it out the window. The stranger picked it up and, with a puzzled expression and a tip of the hat, went off down the street.

The next day, Sister Eulalia was told that a man was at the door, insisting on seeing her. She went down and found the stranger waiting. Without a word he handed her a roll of bills. "What's this?" she asked.

"That's the sixty bucks you have coming. Don't Despair paid five to one."

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us. -- Helen Keller

Two seniors, competitors in a swimming match, were chatting. One said he was 82 and attributed his good health to his swimming. They discussed the importance of keeping active at their point in life, and the 82 year old stated proudly, "I'm still teaching. I'm never going to retire." After a moment's pause, he added, "Well, maybe when I'm 100."

"What'll you do then?" inquired the other senior, "Start a new career?"

"I haven't decided," he replied. "I just try to take it one century at a time."

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of Lot. "Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned to salt," she said. She looked around the class and one little girl, Brittany, tentatively raised her hand. "Yes?" said the teacher.

"I was wondering," said little Brittany, "what happened to his flea?"

After the family sang some carols, four-year-old Kevin Kneeland commented, "Wasn't it good of the shepherds to put on clean clothes when they went to see baby Jesus?"

His mother asked, "What do you mean?"

Johnny explained, "We just sang, 'While Shepherds Washed Their Socks by Night'."

At the start of every Mass, the priest would make the sign of the cross, followed by a processional Hymn and blessing, after which the congregation responded, "And also with you."

One Sunday, after making the sign of the cross, the priest appeared to be having some difficulty with the sound system during the Hymn. At the conclusion of the hymn, the priest said, "There appears to be something wrong with the mike."

"The congregation automatically responded, "And also with you."

I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know." -- Mark Twain

Stumbling onto a bus just as it was leaving, a drunk staggered down the aisle and flopped into the seat next to a very disapproving woman. With a haughty sneer, she said, "You, sir, are going straight to hell."

"Oh, no," said the drunk, struggling to get out of the seat, "Don't tell me I'm on the wrong bus again!"

Blanche had a medium arrange a seance to get in touch with her deceased husband Phil who had been a waiter at a famous restaurant. After the lights had been dimmed, the medium went into a trance and suddenly the table began to move.

“Phil -- is that you?” cried Blanche. “Speak to me! Speak to me!”
“I can’t,” came a distant, muffled voice. “It’s not my table.”

The rector asked little Brittany what she thought of her first church service.
“The music was nice,” she said, “but the commercial was too long.”

The rector of a small Episcopal chapel in West Virginia presided at so many shotgun weddings that he nicknamed his church “Winchester Cathedral”.
-- Rev. Lowell D. Striker

A priest credits his success and popularity to a silent prayer that he offers each time he takes to the pulpit. It goes thus: “Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff,
And nudge me when I’ve said enough.”

A prominent surgeon died and went to heaven. The angel at the gates said, “Is there anything you’d like to get off your conscience before you come in?”

“Yes,” said the surgeon. “There is one thing that has been bothering me. In my younger days when I was a junior surgeon at St. Bartholomew’s, I used to play for the hospital football team. During a closely fought match, I scored a touchdown which I thought was offside, but the referee allowed it and we won the game.”

“That’s all right,” said the angel. “We have a note of that particular incident and you needn’t worry about it at all.”

“Well, thank you, St. Peter,” said the M.D. “You’ve set my mind at rest.”

“Oh, I’m not St. Peter,” said the angel. “I’m St. Bartholomew.”

Mary Williams decided to apply for work in a church office and she located a church that was looking for a secretary. She filled out a job application and a few days later, she was interviewed by the pastor.

She had not filled in the year of her birth on the application. “I see that your birthday is July tenth,” said the pastor. “May I ask what year?”

“Every year,” she replied.

The following story is attributed to Mark Twain:

“I once heard a preacher who was powerful good. I decided to give him every cent I had with me. But he kept at it too long. Ten minutes later I decided to keep the bills and give him my loose change. Another ten minutes and I was darned if I’d give him anything at all. Then, when he finally stopped, and the plate came around, I was so exhausted, I stole two dollars from the plate in sheer spite.” Twain concluded, “It all goes to show how a little thing like this can lead to crime.”

During Sunday’s morning service, a woman became terribly worried that she might have left a roast

cooking in the oven. She wrote a note to her husband, an usher, and passed it to him by way of another usher.

The latter, thinking it was a note for the pastor handed it to the minister with the morning's offering. The minister was just about to begin his sermon. He shuffled the note in with his sermon manuscript and paid no attention to it until he was well into his oration. Imagine his surprise when halfway through the sermon his eyes fell on the following words: "Please go home and turn off the gas."

Announcement in a church bulletin: A cookbook is being compiled by the ladies of the church. Please submit your favourite recipe, also a short antidote for it.

Pastor Denning was talking to the eight-year-olds' Sunday School class about things money can't buy. "It can't buy laughter," he told them. "That comes from the soul. And it can't buy love." Driving this point home, he said, "What would you do if I offered you \$1,000 not to love your mother and father?"

A few moments of silence ensued while the boys and girls mulled this over and then a small voice demanded: "How much would you give me not to love my big sister?"

The congregation was surprised one Sunday morning to find the warden the pulpit. He explained that the pastor had the flu, and had asked him to conduct the worship service.

"After agreeing to do it," the man said, "I began to panic at the thought of preparing a talk on such short notice. The panic subsided when I thought of those comforting words, 'Ask and ye shall receive'. I remembered that all I had to do is ask for anything I wanted, so I did."

He paused a moment before adding, "But, as you can see, I didn't catch the flu, and I still had to come here this morning."

An enthusiastic minister was exhorting his congregation to become more active in church affairs, to get the church on its feet.

"Brothers and sisters," he proclaimed. "What this church needs is the energy to get up and walk."

One of his deacons said, "Let her walk, brother, let her walk!"

The preacher raised his voice a little and added, "But we cannot be satisfied with walking, we've got to pick up speed and run." The same deacon chimed in "Let her run, brother, let her run!"

The preacher was really getting into his message now. "But running's not enough either. One of these days this church has got to fly!" That same deacon echoed, "Let her fly, brother, let her fly!"

The preacher paused for a moment and said solemnly, "But if this church is going to fly we are all going to have to work harder and give more money!" The deacon said softly, "Let her walk, brother, let her walk."

A mission church in an Alaskan town was losing its minister. A pastor-seeking committee was formed, all the proper papers were filled out and many phone calls made to the Board of National Missions in New York City.

Months went by without any sign of the church getting a new minister. Finally, in frustration, the committee's chairwoman dashed off one more note to the Board. It read, "Forget the minister."

We've found sinning is more fun."
The new minister arrived in two weeks.

Father Owens, the parish priest, was being honoured at a dinner on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his pastorate. A leading local politician, who was a lawyer and a member of the priest's congregation, was to give the keynote speech at the dinner, but found himself delayed in court. The toastmaster decided to proceed without him.

After all the laudations had been heaped upon the venerable priest, he rose to acknowledge the tributes given him.

"The seal of the confessional," he said, "can never be broken, and so I can only hint gently of my impressions when I first came here twenty-five years ago. Oh, I thought I had been assigned a terrible place. The very first chap who entered my confessional told me how he had stolen a television set, and when stopped by a policeman, had almost murdered the officer. Further, he told me he had embezzled money from his place of business and had an adulterous affair with his partner's wife. I was appalled. But as the days went on I knew that my people were not all like that and I had, indeed, a fine parish full of understanding and loving people."

Just as Father Owens finished his thanks, the politician arrived full of apologies and rushed to the dais to make the gift presentation speech.

"I'll never forget the first day our pastor arrived in this parish," said the politician. "In fact, I had the honour of being the first one to go to him in confession."

A twenty-three-year-old asked his minister, "Can I live a good Christian life on \$100 a week?"
The minister replied: "That's all you CAN do!"

The pastor went to see his doctor for advice about his wife's snoring.

The doctor asked, "Does her snoring really disturb you?"

The pastor replied, "Does it disturb me? Why it disturbs the entire congregation!"

Announcement in a church bulletin: The senior pastor will be away for two weeks. The staff members in charge during his absence can be found pinned to the church notice board.

Announcement in a church bulletin: Visitors are asked to sing their names at the church entrance.

Announcement in a church bulletin: Our young people are preparing the pizza dinner. It will be held in the parish hall.

In a church bulletin: The concert was a great success. Special thanks are due the vicar's daughter who laboured the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.

Mrs. Moore apologized to her unexpected ministerial guest for serving the apple pie without cheese. Her son slipped quietly away from the table for a moment, then returned with a small piece of cheese, which he laid on the guest's plate. The visitor smiled thankfully at the lad. Putting the cheese in his mouth, he remarked, "You must have sharper eyes than your mother, sonny. Where did you find it?"

The boy replied with a flush of pride, "In the mousetrap."

Six-year-old Beth Marsh was asked what she was going to give her brother for Christmas. "I don't know," she answered.

"What did you give him last year?"

"The chicken pox."

Rt. Reverend Charles Francis Hall, Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire, while attending the 1968 Lambeth Conference in London, was to attend a special service at Westminster Abbey. His wife, out shopping with another bishop's wife, realized it was almost time for the service at the Abbey, jumped into a taxi, directing the driver, "Take us to the cathedral."

He deposited them at the Roman Catholic cathedral. Not realizing where they were, they marched up to an usher, "We're bishops' wives. Where do we sit?"

No one recalls the response of the usher, but the story made the front page of London newspapers the next day.

Found in a Church Bulletin: "Hymn 58 - 'Gold Will Take Care of You'."

A young usher, who had never before participated in a wedding, asked an arriving guest, "Are you a friend of the bride or groom?"

"I'm a friend of both," came the reply.

"I'm sorry, Madam," the youthful usher replied. "I'm afraid you'll have to choose a side. I haven't been told where to seat the neutrals."

A lady was walking in the country with her 5-year-old grandson just after the first heavy frost of the season had given the foliage a brilliantly coloured crazy quilt appearance. "Just think," the grandmother marvelled, gazing at the scarlet-and-gold hillside, "God painted all that." "Yes," the grandson agreed, "and He even did it with his left hand." "What do you mean, 'He did it with his left hand?'" she asked, somewhat puzzled by the remark. "Well," the boy replied reasonably, "at Sunday School, they told us that Jesus is sitting on the right hand of God!"

A lady in Tennessee consulted her pastor for advice. She was frequently visited by Jehovah's Witnesses, and wanted to know what she could do to escape this annoyance.

Her pastor suggested she buy an American flag, place it inside her front door, and ask such callers to pledge allegiance before their spiel. "They will refuse to honour the flag," he predicted, "and your problem will be solved."

So she purchased an American flag and positioned it inside her front door. Two days later she spotted a visitor coming up the walk with paraphernalia under her arm. Soon the bell rang. When the visitor asked for a few minutes of her time, the lady said, "You may, but first you must pledge allegiance to the flag."

The visitor pledged allegiance to the flag inside the door, then kept on talking, "In all my eighteen years as an Avon lady, this is the first time I've ever been asked to pledge allegiance to the flag!"

A prison chaplain said to a soon-to-be ex-convict, "As you make your way in the world, son, remember the sermons you heard while you were here."

The prisoner replied: "Chaplain, no one who's heard you preach would ever want to come back here."

One sunny Sunday morning, Henry Jones awoke to find his wife standing over him, shaking him by the shoulder. "You have to get up," she urged. "We have to get ready for church."

"I don't want to go to church," he replied. "I want to stay in bed."

Her arms crossed over her chest, his wife demanded, "Give me three good reasons why you should stay in bed and not go to church."

"OK," he answered. "First, I don't get anything out of the service. Second, I don't like the people there. And third, no one there likes me. Now can you give me three good reasons why I should go to church?"

His wife responded, "First, it will do you some good. Second, there are people who really do like you and they'll miss you if you aren't there. And third, you're the minister!"

In announcing the church's new public address system, the rector told the congregation that the microphone and wiring had been paid for out of church funds.

Then he added, "The loudspeaker has been donated by a member of the congregation in memory of his wife."

A parishioner underwent an operation at the local hospital. When he came out of the anaesthesia, he asked a nurse, "How come all the shades on the windows are pulled down?"

The nurse answered, "The house across the street is on fire, and we didn't want you to wake up thinking that the operation was a failure."

Did you hear about the ostentatious bishop who had his car fitted with stained glass windows?

Billy Graham tells the amusing story of a fire that broke out in a small town church.

When the fire brigade, siren wailing, arrived on the spot, the minister recognized one of the men.

"Hello there, Jim. I haven't seen you in church for a long time," he chided.

"Well," answered the sweating man struggling with the hose, "it's been a long time since there's been any kind of fire in this church."

When a church seeks a pastor, they want the strength of an eagle, the grace of a swan, the gentleness of a dove, the friendliness of a sparrow, the eye of a hawk, and the night hours of an owl. And when they catch this rare bird, they expect him to live on birdseed!

A certain curate in the course of conversation at a dinner party some time ago remarked to a friend, "I had a curious dream last night, but as it was about my vicar, I hardly like to tell it." On being pressed, however, he began. "I dreamed I was dead and was on my way to Heaven, which was reached by a very long ladder. At the foot I was met by an angel, who pressed a piece of chalk into my hand and said, 'If you climb long enough you will reach heaven, but for every sin you are conscious of having committed, you must mark a rung of the ladder with the chalk as you go up.' I took the chalk and started. I had climbed very, very far and was feeling very tired when I suddenly saw my vicar coming down. 'Hello!' I said. 'What are you going down for?' 'More chalk,' he replied."

Rabbi Mordecai Goodman sat in the synagogue all alone, tears streaming down his cheeks. He just learned that his only son had deserted the ways of his ancestors and had become a Protestant. The rabbi was sobbing uncontrollably when suddenly he heard the voice of God: "What is troubling you?"

"I'm so ashamed," cried the Rabbi. "My only son gave up being a Jew and became a Christian!" "Yours too?" replied the Lord.

To his horror, the pastor discovered during the service that he had forgotten his sermon notes, so he said to the congregation, by way of apology, that this morning he should have to depend upon the Lord for what he might say, but next Sunday he would come better prepared.

As Father Theodore O'Brien walked down the street one day, he met the Reverend Paul Whittelsey, who was playing "sidewalk superintendent" at the building of his new Congregational church. The priest inquired politely how the church was coming along and how well the contributions were coming in.

"Everything is fine, Father," the minister assured him. Then he added, "Perhaps you'd like to make a contribution yourself."

"I'd certainly like to," answered the priest, "but my bishop would never allow me to contribute to a Protestant church."

The next morning, however, when opening his mail, Mr. Whittelsey found a check for \$50 with this note from Father O'Brien: "Although my bishop would never consent to a contribution for the erection of a Protestant church, there must be some expense involved in the tearing down of the old church. I'm sure he would never object to my contributing to that."

A gent was coming out of church after the morning service and met the rector, who was standing at the door as usual shaking hands with the parishioners. The rector grasped the man by the hand,

pulled him aside, and said to him, "You need to join the Army of the Lord!"

The man replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Father."

The rector questioned, "How come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?"

The man whispered back, "I'm in the secret service."

Sign on an American convalescent home: For the sick and tired of the Episcopal Church.

After church one Sunday, two parishioners were critiquing Father Jim's sermon. The first member said, "I thought the sermon was divine. It reminded me of the peace of God. It passed all understanding."

The second member observed, "It reminded me of the mercy of God. I thought it would endure forever."

Some real answers given on a Bible knowledge test:

1. Noah's wife was Joan of Ark.
2. Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day and a ball of fire by night.
3. Moses went to the top of Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Commandments.
4. The seventh commandment is "Thou shall not admit adultery."
5. Joshua let the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.
6. Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
7. The people who followed Jesus were called the 12 Decibels.
8. The epistles were the wives of the apostles.
9. One of the opossums was St. Matthew.
10. Salome danced in seven veils in front of King Harrod's.
11. Paul preached acrimony, which is another name for marriage.
12. David fought the Finkelsteins, a race of people who lived in biblical times.
13. The Jews had trouble throughout their history with unsympathetic Genitals.
14. A Christian should have only one wife. This is called monotony.

Mrs. Reed, a Southern Baptist for more than fifty years, loved to hear a fiery sermon. She would rock back and forth in the front pew in time to the minister's cadences, take a dip of snuff, and cry, "A-a-a-amen," at every ministerial denunciation. When the minister spoke harshly of sex, drinking, smoking, drug-taking, movie-going, and dancing, she approved heartily, taking snuff at each admonition and shouting her enthusiastic "A-a-a-amen."

One Sunday the minister began, "And now let me talk about another vicious habit that, fortunately, is going increasingly out of fashion. I refer to the deplorable practice of snuff-dipping--"

Whereupon Mrs. Reed sat bolt upright and muttered under her breath, "Wouldn't you know? He's stopped preaching and begun meddling."

At a mental hospital the staff found some of the patients were gaining weight, so they were put on a diet of a glass of Tab and one apple for lunch. After eating their light lunch, the dieting group would start to sing to everyone else in the hospital lunchroom. They became known as the "Moron

Tab and Apple Choir”.

Saint Peter stopped a man at the gates and said, “I can’t let you in here until you can prove that you know the name of the guy who runs this place.”

“That’s easy,” the man said, “His name is Andy.”

“Andy!? What makes you think His name is Andy?” Saint Peter asked.

“Well, it’s from that old song we used to sing: Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me...”

Max Cohen comes home from the pet shop with a parrot and places it on its perch. “Shalom alaichem,” Cohen says.

“Alaichem shalom,” the parrot replies.

Cohen is flabbergasted. “You’re Jewish? You speak Hebrew?”

“Of course,” the parrot replies, “I’m Orthodox.”

“You pray?”

“Of course,” the parrot says. He reaches under one wing, takes out a tiny skullcap and prayer shawl and put them on. “In fact,” the parrot insists, “since next week is Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, I’d like you to take me to the synagogue with you.”

Immediately Cohen sees a profit in the situation. He tells his friends at the synagogue about his amazing pet. Just as he expects, they accuse him of having lost his mind. So he bets various parishioners a total of two thousand dollars that he has a parrot who prays.

Rosh Hashanah arrives, Cohen takes the parrot to the synagogue - and the parrot doesn’t pray a single word. Cohen is two thousand in the hole. When he gets the parrot back home, Cohen grabs the bird with the obvious intent of wringing its neck.

“Hold it, you idiot,” the parrot says.

“Why should I hold it?” Cohen demands. “I bet my friends you would pray, and when you didn’t, I lost two thousand dollars.”

“But Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is in ten days,” the parrot points out.

“So?” Cohen says.

“On Yom Kippur we Orthodox Jews sing, the Kol Nidre.”

“So?”

“So bet everyone I can sing the Kol Nidre,” the parrot says.

“But you didn’t pray a word on Rosh Hashanah,” Cohen says.

“And you should thank me for it,” the parrot says. “Think of the odds you’ll get on Yom Kippur.”

A man went to the race track and noticed a priest make the sign of the cross over a horse. Then that horse went on to win the first race. So the man watched each time the priest made the sign, bet on that horse, and each time, the horse was a winner. By the time the last race came up, the man’s winnings totalled \$18000. He again watched the priest make the sign, and then dashed off and bet everything on that horse. The gates opened, the horses were off, and after a few steps, the one he had bet on fell dead.

Finding the priest, the man asked what had gone wrong. The priest replied “You Protestants just don’t know the difference between a blessing and the last rites.”

A Jewish lady named Mrs. Rosenberg tells of an incident many years ago when she was stranded late one night at a fashionable resort - one that did not admit Jews. The desk clerk looked down at his book and said, "Sorry, no room. The hotel is full."

Mrs. Rosenberg said, "But your sign says that you have vacancies."

The desk clerk stammered, and then said curtly, "You know that we do not admit Jews. Now if you'll try the other side of town ..."

Mrs. Rosenberg stiffened noticeably, and then said, "I'll have you know I have converted to your religion."

The surprised desk clerk said, "Oh yeah? Then let me give you a little test. How was Jesus born?"

"He was born to a virgin named Mary in a little town called Bethlehem."

"Very good," replied the clerk. "Tell me more."

"He was born in a manger."

"That's right," said the clerk. "And why was he born in a manger?"

Mrs. Rosenberg smiled triumphantly, and said in a loud voice, "Because a jerk like you in the hotel wouldn't give a poor Jewish lady a room for the night!"

Two guys died and find themselves at the gates of Heaven. St. Peter declared that they can enter if they can answer a simple question. To the first man, he asked, "What is Easter?"

The man replied, "Oh, that's easy. That's the holiday in the fall when everyone gets together, eats, turkey and is thankful ..."

"What is Easter?" St. Peter demanded of the second man.

"Easter is the Christian holiday that coincides with the Jewish celebration of Passover. Jesus and his disciples were eating at the last supper, and shortly after, he was betrayed by one of his disciples, and taken by the Romans, forced to wear a crown of thorns, and finally he was crucified on a cross. After he died, he was buried in a cave that was sealed by a boulder. Every year at Easter, the boulder is moved aside and Jesus comes out. If he sees his shadow, there'll be six more weeks of winter."

The Pope had a meeting with all his bishops and cardinals at the Vatican one day, and during a break, one of the cardinals, at a window getting some air, noticed Jesus Christ walking up the Vatican steps. Thinking he must be seeing things, he got several of his colleagues to confirm that it was in fact Jesus Christ walking up the Vatican steps. The Pope then came to the window to see for himself, and confirmed that it was indeed Jesus on the steps. One cardinal spoke for all: "Your worship, Lord Jesus Christ is coming to visit us! What should we do?"

The Pope replied, "Look busy."

A potentially dangerous situation has developed in the church sanctuary.

The pews, which are as old as the church, have begun to dry out. This loss of moisture, and the subsequent loss of weight, has led to the distinct possibility that they might float free. This presents the possibility that during worship, a free-floating pew could damage a member or guest. Further, it is believed that even if a member or a guest were able successfully to dodge an oncoming free-floating pew, the evasive action would certainly disrupt the spiritual tranquillity of the worshipping dodger.

The problem was brought before a committee in the latter part of last year. The committee first considered using steel cables to anchor the pews to bedrock, which is 247 feet beneath the church.

After receiving the cost estimate of \$14,912.77 and extensive consultations with engineers, this idea was abandoned. The committee, after deliberating, deciding that adding weight to the pews would be a better solution to the problem. The committee considered using brass scrap or lead ingots but they proved to be too expensive. Pig iron was found to be cheaper, but it, like brass and lead, had a certain lifeless quality. The committee searched for a medium density object which was both sparkling and vibrant.

After sifting through all of the possibilities, the committee has opted to use warm bodies to weigh down the pews, and the committee is asking the membership to provide the necessary weight. This can be done by coming to church and, if possible, by bringing a medium density object (in the form of a friend or neighbour) with you.

A blonde got on an aeroplane and sat down in the first class section. The stewardess told her that she must move to coach because she didn't have a first class ticket. The blonde replied, "I'm blonde, I'm smart, I have a good job, and I'm staying in first class until we reach Jamaica."

The stewardess called the pilot, who also asks the woman to leave, but she replied, "I'm blonde, I'm smart, I have a good job, and I'm staying in first class until we reach Jamaica."

The pilot was perplexed - a passenger has never disobeyed him before, and the line-up of impatient passengers wanting to get by to get to their seats was growing.

A priest near the head of that line tapped the pilot on the shoulder and says, "I think I can help you out." He whispered in the pilot's ear, and the pilot smiled, went to the blonde and whispered in her ear. She immediately got up and went to her assigned seat in the coach section.

The onlookers are astounded. The stewardess asked the pilot what he said to get her to move. The priest smiled as the pilot replied, "I told her that the rear half of the aeroplane will land in Jamaica before the front half."

The Community Church once brought in a performing horse. They asked the horse how many Commandments, and he stamped ten times. Then asked how many apostles, and he stamped twelve times.

Some wise guy in the crowd asked, "How many hypocrites are there in this church?" The horse went into a tap dance on all fours.

After a few days, the Lord called to Adam and said, "It is time for you and Eve to begin the process of populating the earth so I want you to kiss her."

Adam answered, "Yes Lord, but what is a 'kiss?'" So the Lord gave a brief description to Adam who took Eve by the hand and took her to a nearby bush. A few minutes later, Adam emerged and said, "Thank you Lord, that was enjoyable."

And the Lord replied, "Yes Adam, I thought you might enjoy that and now I'd like you to caress Eve."

And Adam said, "What is a 'caress?'" So the Lord again gave Adam a brief description and Adam went behind the bush with Eve. Quite a few minutes later, Adam returned, smiling, and said, "Lord, that was even better than the kiss."

And the Lord said, "You've done well, Adam. And now I want you to make love to Eve."

And Adam asked, "What is 'make love' Lord?" So the Lord again gave Adam directions and Adam went again to Eve behind the bush, but this time he reappeared in two seconds. And Adam said,

“Lord, what is a ‘headache?’”

A millionaire was speaking in church about the influence that religion has had in his life. He related the story of how, as a lad, he cut a neighbour’s lawn and was given a silver dollar for his efforts. He resolved to keep that coin, his first earned income, for the rest of his life. However, the following Sunday, a visiting missionary spoke in church of his work and the young lad was so impressed that he donated his coin to the missionary’s work.

“And that great act of charity, ladies and gentlemen, brought me great inner peace and satisfaction, for I had donated all the money I had. I firmly believe that because of that act of generosity, the Lord blessed me with all the success I’ve since had in business.”

The congregation was impressed by the millionaire’s talk except for one crusty little lady near the back. “I dare you to do it again,” she quipped.

One day, two nuns were driving down the road and got a flat tire right in front of the Unemployment Office. They didn’t know how to change a tire, and were standing around the car just looking at it. Two good samaritans yelled-out from the door of the office that they would gladly change the flat if the nuns would hold their place in line. The nuns agreed, and got in queue while the men changed their tire. Just then, a couple of drunks stumbled-by, saw the nuns in the Unemployment line and remarked, “Hey, I know times are hard, but I had no idea the Pope was laying off!”

Reported to be seen on a sign outside a church in Calgary, Alberta: “The meek shall inherit the earth.” Underneath it, a graffitist had scrawled “But not the mineral rights.”

A priest made a slip of the tongue as he delivered his sermon. What he meant to say was, “Let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant with God.” The way it came out was, “Let us bind ourselves with willing blondes ...”

Two journalists, an American and an Englishman, were discussing the Pilgrim settlement in America, and the story of the first Thanksgiving. The American asked if Thanksgiving was celebrated in Great Britain.

“Yes,” the English journalist replied, “but we celebrate it on the 6th of September.”

“Why then?” asked the American.

With a “gotcha, Yank” smile, the Englishman answered, “That’s when they left.”

A church was preparing for Christmas services. The rector decided he wanted a banner made for the entryway and had a parishioner call the banner company. The parishioner told the man on the phone the message he wanted and the dimensions needed for the entryway. The sign came back a few days later: “Unto Mary Jesus was born, six feet long and two feet wide”.

About a century or two ago, the Pope decided that all the Jews had to leave Rome. Naturally there

was a big uproar from the Jewish community. So the Pope made a deal. He would have a religious debate with a member of the Jewish community. If the Jew won, the Jews could stay. If the Pope won, the Jews would leave.

The Jews realized that they had no choice. They looked around for a champion who could defend their faith, but no one wanted to volunteer. It was too risky. So they finally picked an old man named Moishe who spent his life sweeping up after people to represent them. Being old and poor, he had less to lose, so he agreed. He asked only for one addition to the debate. Not being used to saying very much as he cleaned up around the settlement, he asked that neither side be allowed to talk. The pope agreed.

The day of the great debate came. Moishe and the Pope sat opposite each other for a full minute before the Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers. Moishe looked back at him and raised one finger. The Pope waved his fingers in a circle around his head. Moishe pointed to the ground where he sat. The Pope pulled out a wafer and a glass of wine. Moishe pulled out an apple.

The Pope stood up and said, "I give up. This man is too good. The Jews can stay."

An hour later, the cardinals were all around the shaken Pope asking him what happened. The Pope said: "First I held up three fingers to represent the Trinity. He responded by holding up one finger to remind me that there was still one God common to both our religions. Then I waved my finger around me to show him, that God was all around us. He responded by pointing to the ground, showing that God was also right here with us. I pulled out the wine and the wafer to show that God absolves us from our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me of original sin. He had an answer for everything. What could I do?"

Meanwhile, the Jewish community had crowded around Moishe, amazed that this old, almost feeble-minded man had done what all their scholars had insisted was impossible! "What happened?" they asked.

"Well," said Moishe, "First he said to me that the Jews had three days to get out of here. I told him that not one of us was leaving. Then he told me that this whole city would be cleared of Jews. I let him know that we were staying right here."

"And then?" asked a woman.

"I don't know," said Moishe. "He took out his lunch and I took out mine."

I'm as baffled as Adam on Mother's Day.

May is Mother Nature's way of apologizing for February. -- Bill Tammeus, Kansas City Star

Tony had a truck in constant need of repair. When he mentioned to his girlfriend, Bette, that he was about to get a new muffler, she told him that if he kept pouring money into the truck, they'd never be able to afford to get married.

Tony explained that he was trying to get the truck in good shape so he could sell it to raise the money they needed for the wedding.

"I'll buy it!" cried Bette.

George Burns discussing his long marriage to Gracie Allen: "Lots of people have asked me what Gracie and I did to make our marriage work. It's simple - we didn't do anything. I think the trouble

with a lot of people is that they work too hard at staying married. They make a business out of it. When you work too hard at a business, you get tired; when you get tired you get grouchy, you fight; and when you start fighting, you're out of business."

One Sunday morning on her way to church with a baby and a three year old in the car, a woman pulled over to the shoulder of the road with a flat tire. She had no idea how to change it, but fortunately, a gentleman pulled up and offered his assistance.

When he had completed the task, she gave him a rag to wipe his hands, and noting that he was wearing a suit, she said "I hope I haven't made you late for church."

Don't worry," he replied. "They won't start without me. I'm the minister."

The bridegroom, who was in a horribly nervous condition, asked to the minister in a loud stage whisper, at the close of the ceremony, "Is it kistomary to cuss the bride?"

The minister replied, "Not yet, but soon enough!"

Is it true that Gideon wrote a special version of the Bible for use in motel rooms?

"Did Moses ever get better in the end?" asked little Sarah when she got home from Sunday school.

"Why," asked her mother, "whatever makes you think he was ill?"

"Well, he must have been," was the reply. "Didn't the Lord have him take two tablets?"

The Sunday School teacher asked each child to identify a favourite Bible character.

"Mine is King Solomon," declared a little girl.

"And why is that?" asked the teacher.

"Because he was so kind to ladies and animals," the child replied.

"Who told you that?" asked the startled teacher.

"Nobody told me. I read it myself in the Bible," said the girl. "It says Solomon kept seven hundred wives and three hundred porcupines."

Arriving for a visit, Joan Ludwig asked her small granddaughter, "Angela, how do you like your new baby brother?"

"Oh, he's all right," the child shrugged. "But there were a lot of things we needed worse."

"So you attend Sunday school," the reverend asked little Eva.

"Oh, yes, sir," said little Eva.

"And you know your Bible?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Could you perhaps tell me something that is in it?"

"I could tell you everything that's in it!"

"Indeed," smiled the reverend. "Do tell me."

“Sister’s steady’s snapshots are in it,” replied little Eva. “And Ma’s recipe for Hungarian goulash is in it, and a lock of my hair, cut off when I was a baby is in it, and the hock ticket for Pa’s watch is in it.”

The Bible is a very ancient book, yet it is always relevant to our lives. People in it have the same problems we do. Think of Noah ... it took him forty days to find a place to park.

The pastor was concerned about sparse attendance. In an effort to make a point he published this item in the church bulletin:

“This. . .is. . .the. . .way. . .the. . .church. . .sometimes. . .looks. . .to. . .the. . .pastor. . .when. . .he. . . goes. . .into. . .the. . .pulpit.

“It would look like this if every body brought somebody else to church.”

The perfect minister is hard to find...

One of the toughest tasks a church faces is choosing a good minister. A member of an official board undergoing this painful process finally lost patience. He’d watched the pastoral relations committee reject applicant after applicant for some fault, alleged or otherwise. It was time for a bit of soul-searching on the part of the committee. So he stood up and read a letter purporting to be from another applicant.

“Gentlemen: Understanding your pulpit is vacant, I should like to apply for the position. I have many qualifications. I’ve been a preacher with much success and also have had some success as a writer. Some say I’m a good organizer. I’ve been a leader most places I’ve been.

“I’m over 50 years of age. I have never preached in one place for more than three years. In some places, I have left town after my work caused riots and disturbances. I must admit I have been in jail three or four times, but not because of any real wrongdoing.

“My health is not too good, though I still get a great deal done. The churches I have preached in have been small, though located in several large cities. I’ve not gotten along well with religious leaders in towns where I have preached. In fact, some have threatened me and even attacked me physically. I am not too good at keeping records. I have been known to forget whom I baptized.

“However, if you can use me, I shall do my best for you.”

The board member looked over at the committee. “Well, what do you think? Shall we call him?”

The good church folk were aghast. Call an unhealthy, trouble-making, absentminded, ex-jailbird? Was the board member crazy? Who signed the application? Who has such colossal nerve?

The board member eyed them all keenly before he answered, “It’s signed, ‘The Apostle Paul’.”

Church sign: “Since you can’t take it with you, why not leave it here?”

A specially chartered plane was carrying the Pope, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the smartest lawyer in the world, and an Eagle Scout on an international goodwill tour, when it ran into a storm. When three of the engines and the hydraulic system started to fail, the pilot got on the plane’s intercom.

“Gentlemen,” he announced to his nervous passengers, “this aircraft is not going to reach its

destination. Not only that, we have only four parachutes for the five of us on board. I hate to be selfish about this, but the early bird gets the worm.” The passengers watched in horror as his parachute opened.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations immediately pointed out that his survival was crucial to world peace and stability. “I must think of the peoples of the world ... and save myself!” With that, he seized a parachute and jumped.

The lawyer immediately jumped up and pointed out that after all he was the smartest lawyer in the world. “At this very moment I have five cases before the US Supreme Court on which hang the civil liberties of generations to come,” he continued. “My career has been a beacon for thousands and I cannot allow it to come to such an untimely end.” Reaching into the pile, he too bailed out.

The Pope, a kindly man, turned to the Eagle Scout. “I’ve lived a long, full life and am quite prepared to meet my Lord and Saviour. Son, you take that last parachute for yourself.”

“Don’t worry, your Holiness,” said the Eagle Scout with a grin. “The world’s smartest lawyer just jumped out of the plane wearing my knapsack.”

A young lawyer was running for Congress and called upon a leading local minister for support in the upcoming election.

“Before I give you my decision,” said the man of the cloth, “let me ask a question. Do you partake of intoxicating beverages?”

“Before I reply,” said the lawyer, “tell me, is this an inquiry or an invitation?”

A new Sunday school teacher had to iron out some problems with the Lord’s Prayer.

One child had to be corrected after repeating, “Howard be thy name.” Another youngster prayed, “Lead us not into Penn Station.” Still another surprised the teacher with, “Our Father, who art in heaven, how’d you know my name?”

Announcement in a church bulletin: CHURCH SUPPER SPECIAL

Chicken \$3

Beef \$4

Children \$2

A minister received this thank you note from a bridegroom he had married: “Dear Reverend, I want to thank you for the beautiful way you brought my happiness to a conclusion.”

Among the graffiti on the wall of a University building: “If God had wanted us to use the metric system, he would have chosen ten disciples.”

The rector had preached a vigorous and thoughtful sermon, and several of the congregation rushed up to congratulate him. One lady, a longtime member, gushed, “Father, every sermon you preach is better than the next one!”

I'll say one thing for the rector - his sermons are sound advice - 99 percent sound, and 1 percent advice.

Willard Scott, at one time the irrepressible weather reporter on the TODAY show, describes growing up in a Baptist church. He tells how on one occasion when he was twelve years old, he took communion and had a most embarrassing thing happen to him. He describes it like this:

“In the Baptist church, they serve grape juice rather than wine, in tiny little individual-sized plastic cups. On this particular occasion, I was trying to get the last bit of juice out of the bottom of the cup with my tongue, when all of a sudden the suction grabbed hold and my tongue got stuck in the cup! I tried desperately to pull that doggone cup off, but it wouldn't budge. Then before I could make another attempt, the pastor asked everyone in the church to hold hands with the person next to him and sing 'Blest Be the Tie That Binds.' Well, I was the one in a bind. Here I was with this cup on my tongue, and the people next to me had grabbed my hands.

“Just when it seemed like I was about to be discovered, I had what I can only regard as a divine inspiration. I sucked the whole cup into my mouth and held it there until the hymn was over. Then, while no one was looking, I reached in and pulled it off my tongue.” -- The Joy of Living

During a flight between New York and Chicago the captain announced over the plane's intercom, “Our number four engine has just been shut off because of mechanical trouble. There is nothing to worry about, however. We can still finish the flight with just three engines. Besides, you will be reassured to know that we have four pastors on board.”

One passenger called the flight attendant and said, “Would you please tell the captain that I would rather have four engines and three pastors?”

Sign in the vestry of a New England church: Will the last person to leave please see that the perpetual light is extinguished.

Sign in a Pennsylvania cemetery: Persons are prohibited from picking flowers from any but their own graves.

One day, two nuns were driving down the road and got a flat tire right in front of the Unemployment Office. They didn't know how to change a tire, and were standing around the car just looking at it. Two good samaritans yelled-out from the door of the office that they would gladly change the flat if the nuns would hold their place in line.

The nuns agreed, and got in queue while the men changed their tire. Just then, a couple of drunks stumbled-by... saw the nuns in the Unemployment line and remarked, “Hey, I know times are hard, but I had no idea the Pope was laying off”!

A man who smelled like a distillery flopped on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half-empty bottle of gin poked-out of his torn coat pocket. He opened a newspaper that he had found, and began reading. After a few minutes, the dishevelled guy turned to the priest and asked, “Say, Father, what causes arthritis?”

“Mister,” the priest responded, “it’s caused by loose living; associating with cheap, wicked women; too much alcohol; and a contempt for your fellow man.”

“Well, I’ll be damned!” the drunk muttered softly, as he returned to his paper.

The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologized: “I’m very sorry, my son. Perhaps I shouldn’t have reacted so strongly. How long have you had arthritis?”

“I don’t have it, Father.”, the man explained. “I just read here that the Pope does.”

The Pope goes to visit the Seven Dwarfs. As he is finishing his speech on comparative religions, Dopey raises his hand to ask a question. “Mr. Pope, are there any dwarf nuns in Rome?”

“No, Dopey,” responds the Pontiff, “there are not”.

“Mr. Pope, are there any dwarf nuns anywhere in Italy?”, Dopey questions.

“No Dopey,” chuckles the Pope, “there are no dwarf nuns in Italy.”

“Mr. Pope,” Dopey asks pleadingly, “are there any dwarf nuns anywhere in the world?”

“No Dopey,” the Pope says sadly, “there are no dwarf nuns anywhere in the world .”

And softly in the background the six remaining dwarves start chanting, “Dopey kissed a penguin, Dopey kissed a penguin.”

The Reverend’s Wife Tells About Her Day:

The other day I went to the local religious book store where I saw a “Honk if you love Jesus” bumper sticker. I bought it and put it on the back bumper of my car. I’m really glad I did. What an uplifting experience followed!

I was stopped at the light of a busy intersection, just lost in thought about the Lord, and didn’t notice that the light had changed. That bumper sticker really worked! I found lots of people who love Jesus. Why, the guy behind me started to honk like crazy. He must really love the Lord, because pretty soon he leaned out of his window and yelled, “Jesus Christ!” as loud as he could. It was like a football game, with him shouting, “Go, Jesus Christ, go!!!”. Everyone else started honking too, so I leaned out my window and waved and smiled at all those loving people.

There must have been a guy from Florida back there because I could hear him yelling something about a sunny beach, and I saw him waving in a funny way with only his middle finger stuck up in the air. I recently asked my two kids what that meant. They kind of squirmed, looked at each other, giggled, and told me that it was the Hawaiian good luck sign. So I leaned out the window and gave him the good luck sign back.

A couple of the people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and were walking toward me. I bet they wanted to pray, but just then I noticed that the light had changed, and I stepped on the gas. It’s a good thing I did, because I was the only car to get across the intersection. I looked back at them standing there. I leaned out the window, gave them a big smile, and held up the Hawaiian good luck sign as I drove away.

Praise the Lord for such wonderful people!!

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, “Does anyone know Jesus’ Mother’s name?” Susie raised her hand and said, “It was Mary.”

The teacher said, “Very good Susie. Do you know Jesus’ Father’s name?”

Little Johnny said, “Yes, it was Virg.” the teacher asked how he came up with her answer. He said, “You know, Verg ‘n Mary.....”

A pious man who had reached the age of 105 suddenly stopped going to synagogue. Alarmed by the old fellow's absence after so many years of faithful attendance the rabbi went to see him. He found him in excellent health, so the rabbi asked, "How come after all these years we don't see you at services anymore?"

The old man looked around and lowered his voice. I'll tell you, Rabbi," he whispered. "When I got to be 90 I expected God to take me any day. But then I got to be 95, then 100, then 105. So I figured that God is very busy and must have forgotten about me and I don't want to remind Him."

The Lord's Lottery

A Sure Fire Stewardship Program Designed And Developed By Dale Vitalis

Theological Basis: 'As a man winneth so will he giveth.' Hez 6:15

Purpose: The 'BLT' (bottom line theory) is to get more money to find its way into the offering plates on Sunday mornings.

Plan: Three simple steps to explosive giving:

1. When the ushers bring the offering plates to the altar the pastor will place all the offering envelopes in a big round tumbler on the altar.
2. One of the acolytes will step forward and draw out one of the offering envelopes from the big round tumbler on the altar.
3. The 'winner' (person or family whose offering envelope is drawn) will receive **DOUBLE THEIR MONEY BACK!!**

Benefits: Fee-nominal!! Listed below are some of the outstanding benefits blessings, if you serve a 'spiritual' congregation) from this 'Lord's Lottery Sure Fire Stewardship Program'

1. More and more members will begin using offering envelopes.
2. When you make the offering envelopes available only to members you will be astounded at how your membership will grow.
3. Members will naturally put in more money because they know that if their envelope is drawn they will get more back (never underestimate the intelligence of your members).
4. Your worship service will reach new heights of excitement. You can imagine the excitement and drama each Sunday as the winning envelope is drawn.
5. You will have no trouble lining up acolytes because of the excitement, honor, and prestige that comes with the job.
6. Your finance committee will never again have to worry about buying those expensive offering envelope boxes. When this new program catches on members will be more than willing to buy their own. You will also discover that many will buy more than one set of envelopes. I call this the 'bingo syndrome.'
7. Pastors will no longer have to work quite so hard on their sermons as that will no longer be the 'main event.'

We were traveling one summer in the Pocono Mountains and, like a good Presbyterian family, attended church while we were on vacation. One lazy Sunday we found our way to a little Methodist Church. It was a hot day and the folks were nearly "out" in the pews. The preacher was preaching

on and on until, all of a sudden, he said, "The best years of my life have been spent in the arms of another man's wife." The congregation let out a gasp, came to immediate attention, and the dozing deacon in the back row dropped his hymnbook. Then the preacher said, "It was my mother." The congregation tittered a little and managed to follow along as the sermon concluded. I filed this trick away in my memory; a great way to get the congregation's attention back when it has been lost. Sure enough, the next summer, on a lazy Sunday, I was preaching and the flies were buzzing around and the ushers were sinking lower and lower in their seats in the back row until I could hardly see them. Then I remembered our experience in the Pocono Mountains, and I said in a booming voice, "The best years of my life have been spent in the arms of another man's wife." Sure enough, I had their attention. One of the ushers in the back row sat up so fast he hit his head on the back of the pew in front of him. I had them. But you know something, I forgot what came next. All I could think to say was, "And for the life of me, I can't remember her name."

The rector finished a forceful sermon on the Ten Commandments. One parishioner was crushed momentarily, but soon perked up. "Anyway," he told himself, "I've never made a graven image."

"Now, children," said the Sunday school teacher, "I have told you about Jonah and the whale. Adam, you may tell me what this story teaches."

"Yes, ma'am," replied Adam. "It teaches that you can't keep a good man down."

During his sermon one Sunday morning, Reverend Sam Phillips said, "In each blade of grass there is a sermon."

The following Tuesday one of his flock saw him pushing a lawn mower on the parsonage lawn, and paused to say: "Well, Sam, I'm glad to see you engaged in cutting your sermons short."

The Episcopal priest, asked for a discount at the hardware store, saying: "I'm a poor preacher." I know," said the storekeeper. "I heard you last Sunday."

A MANUAL AND A MODEL was the title of a textbook I was required to buy for English 1 back in 1956 when I was a freshman at North Park College in Chicago. (The book is a guide to the preparation of term papers, and is itself written in the form of a term paper, hence its title.) An overly zealous religious type, I thought what the professor said was "Emmanuel and a Model." I was looking forward to a racy novel about the Messiah and Miss January!

-- Rev. Lowell D. Streiker

Found in a church bulletin: Do you know what Hell is like?
Come in and hear our organist.

A preacher retired and moved to the country to enjoy life and practice his hobby of yard work. Needing a lawn mower, he headed into town to buy one. On the way he saw a sign advertising a

lawn mower for sale. He stopped at the house and a young lad came out and took him behind the house to see the machine. The engine was sputtering along at idle speed. The preacher increased the speed of the engine and mowed a few strips. Satisfied that the mower would do the job they settled on a price of \$25.00.

Later in the day, the young lad was riding his bicycle when he spied the preacher pulling on the engine starter rope. The kid stopped and watched for a couple of minutes. He asked, "What's wrong?"

The preacher replied, "I can't get this mower started. Do you know how?"

The kid said, "Yep. You have to cuss it."

The preacher rose up indignantly. "I am a preacher and if I ever did cuss, not saying I have, I've forgotten how to do it after all these years."

The kid replied, "Preacher, you keep on pulling that rope and it'll all come back to ya."

The little church in the suburbs suddenly stopped buying from its regular office supply dealer. So, the dealer telephoned Deacon Brown to ask why. "I'll tell you why," said Deacon Brown. "Our church ordered some pencils from you to be used in the pews for visitors to register."

"Well", inquired the dealer, "didn't you receive them yet?"

"Oh, we received them all right," replied Deacon Brown. "However, you sent us some golf pencils ... each stamped with the words, 'Play Golf Next Sunday'."

A primary school class had just returned from a trip to a working farm. When he got home, mom asked little David if he had enjoyed the trip.

"Yes it was great - we saw sheep, horses, goats, and f***ers."

"er, Fine, fine," stammered a surprised mom, "I know what the sheep and the rest are, but what is a f***er?"

David replied, "Oh, they're the animals that give us milk".

Cautiously, mom asked, "But who said they were called, er, f***ers?"

David innocently responded, "That was our teacher. Well actually she called them 'effers' but we all knew what she meant."

Inscribed in stone over the great front doors of an old church being restored was: "This is the Gate of Heaven."

Just below it someone had placed a small cardboard sign which read: "Use Other Entrance."

From the Merthyr (South Wales) Express: "The Treharris choir is seeking new members. No vice test required."

Grandpa and Grandma were sitting in their porch rockers watching the beautiful sunset and reminiscing about "the good old days". Grandma turned to Grandpa and said, "Honey, do you remember when we first started dating and you used to just casually reach over and take my hand?" Grandpa looked over at her, smiled and obligingly took her aged hand in his.

With a wry little smile, Grandma pressed a little farther, "Honey, do you remember how after we

were engaged, you'd sometimes lean over and suddenly kiss me on the cheek?" Grandpa leaned slowly toward Grandma and gave her a lingering kiss on her wrinkled cheek.

Growing bolder still, Grandma said, "Honey, do you remember how, after we were first married, you'd kind of nibble on my ear?" Grandpa slowly got up from his rocker and headed into the house.

Alarmed, Grandma said, "Honey, where are you going?"

Grandpa replied, "To get my teeth!"

A journalist assigned to the Jerusalem bureau takes an apartment overlooking the Wailing Wall. Every day when she looks out, she sees an old Jewish man praying vigorously. So the journalist goes down to the wall, and introduces herself to the old man. She asks: "You come every day to the wall. How long have you done that and what are you praying for?"

The old man replies, "I have come here to pray every day for 25 years. In the morning I pray for world peace and then for the brotherhood of man. I go home have a cup of tea, and I come back and pray for the eradication of illness and disease from the earth."

The journalist is amazed. "How does it make you feel to come here every day for 25 years and pray for these things?" she asks.

The old man replies calmly: "Like I'm talking to a wall."

A golfer hit his drive on the first hole 300 yards right down the middle. When it came down, however, it hit a sprinkler and the ball went sideways into the woods. He was angry, but he went into the woods and hit a very hard 2 iron. The ball hit a tree, bounced back straight at him, struck him in the temple, killing him.

He found himself at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter looked at the big book and said, "I see you are a golfer, is that correct?"

"Yes, I am," he replied.

St Peter then said, "Do you hit the ball a long way?"

The golfer replied, "You bet. After all, I got here in 2, didn't I?"

There was an expectant father in the military who had spent quite some time waiting for his first offspring to arrive, but due to false labours, his leave had expired and he had to return to duty. He told his father-in-law - "When my son comes, do not call up the base and say that I have become a father of a boy, etc. otherwise I'll have to shell out a lot for parties etc. Just tell me that the clock has arrived. This will be our code for the arrival of the baby." The offspring finally arrived several days later, but it's a daughter.

The message sent to the new father at his base was:

"The clock has arrived, but the pendulum is missing".

An elderly man was at home, dying in bed. He smelled the aroma of his favourite chocolate chip cookies baking. He wanted one last cookie before he died. He fell out of bed, crawled to the landing, rolled down the stairs, and crawled into the kitchen where his wife was busily baking cookies. With waning strength he crawled to the table and was just barely able to lift his withered arm to the cookie sheet.

As he grasped a warm, moist, chocolate chip cookie, his favourite kind, his wife suddenly whacked

his hand with a spatula.
“Why did you do that?”, he whispered.
“They’re for the funeral.”

A priest was walking along the corridor of the parochial school near the preschool wing when a group of little ones were trotting by on the way to the cafeteria. One little lad of about three or four stopped and looked at him in his clerical clothes and asked, “Why do you dress funny?” He told him that he was a priest and that this is the uniform priests wear. Then the boy pointed to the priest’s plastic collar tab and asked, “Do you have an owie?” The priest was perplexed till he realized that to him the collar tab looked like a band aid. So the priest took it out and handed it to the boy to show him. On the back of the tab are raised letters giving the name of the manufacturer. The little guy felt the letters, and the priest asked, “Do you know what those words say?” “Yes I do,” said the lad who was not old enough to read. Peering intently at the letters he said, “Kills ticks and fleas up to six months!”

Senior’s Lament (author unknown)

Just a line to say I’m living - that I’m not among the dead,
Though I’m getting more forgetful and mixed up in the head,
For sometimes I can’t remember when I stand at the foot of the stairs,
If I must go up for something or...I’ve just come down from there.

And before the fridge...so often my poor mind is filled with doubt,
Have I just put the food away, or have I come to take it out?
And then there are times it’s dark out with my nightcap on my head,
I don’t know if I’m retiring... or, just getting out of bed.

So if it’s my turn to write you, there’s no need getting sore,
I may think I have written, and don’t want to be a bore.
There I stood beside the mail box with my face so very red,
Instead of mailing you my letter, I had opened it...instead.

A young boy was afraid of a thunderstorm, so his grandmother told him the thunder was the sound of the angels bowling. He thought about this for a few minutes and said, “Grandma, I think angels are pretty stupid to go bowling during a thunderstorm.”

Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in his shoes. Then when you do criticize that person, you’ll be a mile away and have his shoes.

A visitor from Holland was chatting with his American friend and was jokingly explaining about

the red, white and blue in the Netherlands flag. "Our flag symbolizes our taxes," he said. "We get red when we talk about them, white when we get our tax bill, and blue after we pay them."

"That's the same with us," the American said, "only we see stars, too."

There was an elderly southern widow who lived in a large mansion She was feeling generous when it came to Thanksgiving, so she called up the local military base, and asked to speak with the lieutenant. "Please send up four nice young men to eat dinner here on Thanksgiving, but please, don't send any Jews. Please, no Jews."

The lieutenant replied, "No problem ma'am, and I am sure I speak for the army when I say we all appreciate your kindness."

Well, Thanksgiving rolled around, and the widow went to answer the door when the bell rang. She was surprised to see four of the darkest skinned men boys that anyone had ever seen, especially in the South. "But... But... There must be some mistake," she stammered.

One of them replied, "No ma'am, Lieutenant Goldstein doesn't make mistakes."

A Lesson For Living

Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation.

Every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window. The man in the other bed began to live for those one-hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and colour of the world outside. The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every colour of the rainbow. Grand old trees graced the landscape, and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance. As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine the picturesque scene. One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by. Although the other man couldn't hear the band - he could see it in his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words. Days and weeks passed.

One morning, the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths only to find the lifeless body of the man by the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. She was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take the body away. As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, he propped himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the world outside. Finally, he would have the joy of seeing it for himself. He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed. It faced a blank wall.

The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window. The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall. She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."

Epilogue. . . . There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations. Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled. If you want to feel rich, just count all of the things you have that money can't buy. "Today is a gift, that's why it is called the present."

A man had a dog that he was attempting to train, alas, with very little success. Ready to give up, he met a very charismatic American evangelist who offered to train the dog overnight. The next day the man returns, and inquires about the dog. The evangelist calls the dog to give a demonstration. Picking up a stick, he throws it and says 'Fetch.' Instantly the dog takes off, grabs the stick and returns. The evangelist says 'Drop' and the dog drops the stick at his feet. 'Roll over' and the dog rolls over. By this time the dog's owner is very excited, and asks if he can have a go. "Sure," replies the evangelist.

"Heel," says the owner And the dog lifted one paw, placed it on the man and said "I command this sickness to leave you..."

A couple more from Rita Rudner:

- "Men forget everything; women remember everything. That's why men need instant replays in sports. They've already forgotten what happened."
- "Men would like monogamy better if it sounded less like monotony."

A little boy opened the big family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the book, and he picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages. "Momma, look what I found," the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked.

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: "I think it's Adam's suit!"

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

A soldier, a marine, and an airman got into a fight about which service is best. The fight was so violent that they killed each other. Soon, they found themselves in heaven reporting to St. Peter and asked him, "Which Branch of Service is the best?"

St. Peter replied: "I can't answer that. I will ask God what He thinks the next time I see Him."

Some time later the three saw St. Peter again and inquired about their question. Suddenly, a dove landed on St. Peter's shoulder carrying a note in its beak. St. Peter opened the note and read it out loud to the three fellows:

“Gentlemen:

All the branches of the Service are ‘honourable and noble.’ Each one of you has served your country well. Be proud of that.

(signed)

GOD, USN (Ret)”

Style and fashion intrude into all walks of our lives. Two fellows who had been rivals all their lives followed different career paths. One eventually became an Admiral in the Navy, the other went into the Catholic Church and became a Bishop. As fate would have it, they happened to meet at the Airport. The Bishop spied the Admiral first and said loudly, “Oh Sky Cap, from what pier is the flight to Dallas leaving?”

The Admiral approached, bowed, and said “Pier 7 Madame, but should you be travelling in your condition ?”

How You Spend Your “Dash” (Author unknown)

I read of a man who stood to speak
At the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on her tombstone
From the beginning ... to the end.

He noted that first came her date of birth
And spoke the following date with tears,
But he said what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years. (1900-1970)

For that dash represents all the time
That she spent alive on earth....
And now only those who loved her
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;
The cars...the house...the cash.
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard...
Are there things you’d like to change?
For you never know how much time is left.
That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough
To consider what’s true and real,
And always try to understand
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger,
And show appreciation more
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect,
And more often wear a smile...
Remembering that this special dash
Might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy's being read
With your life's action's to rehash...
Would you be proud of the things they say
About how you spent your dash?

Spend it well.

"The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps".

Proverbs 16:9.

Kids' Advice To Kids

"Never trust a dog to watch your food." Patrick, age 10
"Never tell your mom her diet's not working." Michael, 14
"Stay away from prunes." Randy, 9
"Don't pull dad's finger when he tells you to." Emily, 10
"When your mom is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair." Taylia, 11
"Never allow your three-year old brother in the same room as your school assignment." Traci, 14
"Don't sneeze in front of mum when you're eating crackers." Mitchell, 12
"Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic-Tac." Andrew, 9
"Never hold a dust buster and a cat at the same time." Kyoyo, 9
"You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk." Armir, 9
"Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts." Kellie, 11
"If you want a kitten, start out by asking for a horse." Naomi, 15
"Felt markers are not good to use as lipstick." Lauren, 9
"Don't pick on your sister when she's holding a baseball bat." Joel, 10
"When you get a bad grade in school, show it to your mom when she's on the phone." Alysha, 13
"Never try to baptize a cat." Eileen, 8

Two nuns went out of the convent to sell cookies. One of them is known as Sister Mathematical (SM) and the other one is known as Sister Logical (SL). It is getting dark and they are still far away from the convent.

SL: Have you noticed that a man has been following us for the past half-hour?

SM: Yes, I wonder what he wants.

SL: It's logical. He wants to rape us.

SM: Oh, no! At this rate he will reach us in 15 minutes at the most. What can we do?

SL: The only logical thing to do of course is that we have to start walking faster.

SM: It is not working.

SL: Of course not. The man did the only obvious thing to do. He started to walk faster too.

SM: So, what shall we do? At this rate he will reach us in one minute.

SL: The only logical thing we can do is split. You go that way and I'll go this way. He cannot follow both of us.

So the man decided to go after Sister Logical. Sister Mathematical arrives at the convent and is worried because Sister Logical has not yet arrived. Finally, Sister Logical arrives.

SM: Sister Logical! Thank God you are here! Tell us what happened!

SL: The only logical thing happened. The man could not follow both of us, so he followed me.

SM: So, what happened? Please tell us.

SL: The only logical thing to happen. I started to run as fast as I could.

SM: So what happened?

SL: The only logical thing to happen. The man also started to run as fast as he could.

SM: And what else?

SL: The only logical thing to happen. He reached me.

SM: Oh, no! What did you do then?

SL: The only logical thing to do. I lifted my dress up.

SM: Oh, Sister. What did the man do?

SL: The only logical thing to do. He pulled down his pants.

SM: Oh, no! What happened then?

SL: Isn't it logical, Sister? A nun with her dress up can run faster than a man with his pants down.
.....and you thought it was dirty...

The boss of a big company needed to call one of his employees about an urgent problem with one of the main computers. He dialled the employee's home phone number and was greeted with a child's whispered, "Hello?"

Feeling put out at the inconvenience of having to talk to a youngster the boss asked, "s your Daddy home?"

"Yes," whispered the small voice.

"May I talk with him?" the man asked.

To the surprise of the boss, the small voice whispered, "No".

Wanting to talk with an adult, the boss asked, "Is your Mommy there?"

"Yes," came the answer.

"May I talk with her?"

Again, the small voice whispered, "No."

Knowing that it was not likely that a young child would be left home alone, the boss decided he would just leave a message with the person who should be there watching over the child. "Is there any one there besides you?" the boss asked the child.

"Yes," whispered the child, "a policeman."

Wondering what a cop would be doing at his employee's home, the boss asked, "May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy," whispered the child.

"Busy doing what?" asked the boss.

"Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the Fireman" came the whispered answer.

Growing concerned and even worried as he heard what sounded like a helicopter through the ear piece on the phone, the boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A hello-copper," answered the whispering voice.

“What is going on there?” asked the boss, now alarmed.

In an awed whispering voice the child answered, “The search team just landed the hello-copper!” Alarmed, concerned, and more than just a little frustrated, the boss asked, “Why are they there?” Still whispering, the young voice replied along with a muffled giggle, “They’re looking for me!”

Before performing a baptism, the priest approached the young father and said solemnly, “Baptism is a serious step. Are you prepared for it?”

“I think so,” the man replied. “My wife has made appetizers and we have a caterer coming to provide plenty of cookies and cakes for all of our guests.”

“I don’t mean that,” the priest responded. “I mean, are you prepared spiritually?”

“Oh, sure,” came the reply. “I’ve got a keg of beer and a case of whiskey.”

This lady surprised a burglar in her kitchen. He was all loaded down with the things he was going to steal. She had no weapon and was all alone. The only thing that she could think to do was quote scripture. So, she held up a hand and shouted: “ACTS 2:38!!!”

The burglar quaked in fear and froze to the point that she is able to get to the phone and call 911 for the police.

When the police arrive, the burglar was still frozen in place. They were very much surprised that a woman alone with no weapon could do this, so one of them asked the lady how this came about. The woman replied: “I quoted scripture.”

The cop turned the burglar: “What was it about the scripture that had such an effect on you?”

The burglar replied: “Scripture! What scripture? I thought she said she had an axe and two 38's.”

Seymour was a good and pious man, and when he passed away, the Lord himself greeted him at the pearly gates of heaven. “Hungry, Seymour?” the Lord asked.

“I could eat,” said Seymour. The Lord opened a can of tuna, and they shared it. While eating this humble meal, Seymour looked down into Hell and noticed the inhabitants devouring enormous steaks, pheasant, pastries and vodka.

The next day, the Lord again asked Seymour if he were hungry, and Seymour again said, “I could eat.” Once again, a can of tuna was opened and shared, while down below Seymour noticed a feast of caviar, champagne, lamb, truffles, brandy, and chocolates.

The following day, mealtime arrived and another can of tuna was opened.

Meekly, Seymour said, “Lord, I am very happy to be in heaven as a reward for the good life I lived. But, this is heaven, and all I get to eat is tuna. But in the Other Place, they eat like Kings. I just don’t understand.”

“To be honest, Seymour,” the Lord said, “for just two people, does it pay to cook?”

A drunken man staggers in to a Catholic church and sits down in a confession box and says nothing. The bewildered priest coughs to attract his attention, but still the man says nothing. The priest then knocks on the wall three times in a final attempt to get the man to speak.

Finally, the drunk replies: “No use knockin’ mate, there’s no paper in this one either.”

After putting her children to bed, a mother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. At last she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard her three-year-old say with a trembling voice, "Who was that?"

The class of first graders were discussing a picture of a family. One little boy in the picture had a different colour hair than the other family members. One child suggested that he was adopted and a little girl said, "I know all about adoptions because I was adopted."

"What does it mean to be adopted?" asked another child.

"It means," said the girl, "that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy."

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.

If marriage were outlawed, only outlaws would have in-laws.

Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark. Professionals built the Titanic.

A new neighbour asked the little girl next door if she had any brothers and sisters. She replied, "No, I'm the lonely child."

A mother was telling her little girl what her own childhood was like. "We used to skate outside on a pond. I had a swing made from a tire; it hung from a tree in our front yard. We rode our pony. We picked wild raspberries in the woods."

The little girl was wide-eyed, taking this in. At last she said, "I sure wish I'd gotten to know you sooner!"

A child asked, "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?"

Grandma mentally polished her halo while she asked, "No, how are we alike?"

"You're both old," he replied.

A little girl was diligently pounding away on her father's word processor. She told him she was writing a story.

“What’s it about?” he asked.
“I don’t know,” she replied. “I can’t read.”

Grandma wanted to find out if her granddaughter had learned her colours yet, so she decided to test her. She would point out something and ask what colour it was. Her granddaughter would tell me, and always she was correct.

It was fun for Grandma, so she continued. At last her granddaughter headed for the door, saying sagely, “Grandma, I think you should try to figure out some of these yourself!”

A ten-year-old, under the tutelage of her grandmother, was becoming quite knowledgeable about the Bible. Then one day she floored her grandmother by asking, “Which Virgin was the mother of Jesus: the Virgin Mary or the King James Virgin?”

A Sunday school class was studying the Ten Commandments. They were ready to discuss the last one. The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was. Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, “Thou shall not take the covers off the neighbour’s wife.

A young boy and his doting grandmother were walking along the sea shore when a huge wave appeared out of nowhere, sweeping the child out to sea. The horrified woman fell to her knees, raised her eyes to the heavens and begged the Lord to return her beloved grandson.

Lo, another wave reared up and deposited the stunned child on the sand before her. The grandmother looked the boy over carefully. He was fine. But still she stared up angrily toward the heavens. “When we came,” she snapped indignantly, “he had a hat!”

I knelt to pray but not for long,
I had too much to do.
I had to hurry and get to work
For bills would soon be due.
So I knelt and said a hurried prayer,
And jumped up off my knees.
My Christian duty was now done,
My soul could rest at ease.
All day long I had no time
To spread a word of cheer.
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They’d laugh at me I’d fear.
No time to give to souls in need
But at last the time, the time to die.
I went before the Lord
For in his hands God held a book;
It was the book of life.
God looked into his book and said “Your name I cannot find.

I once was going to write it down ... But never found the time”

Two beggars are sitting on a park bench in Mexico City. One is holding a cross and one a Star of David. Both are holding hats to collect contributions. People walk by, lift their noses at the man with the Star of David and drop money in the hat held by the man with the cross. Soon the hat of the man with the cross is filled and the hat of the man with the star of David is empty.

A priest watches and then approaches the men. He turns to the man with the Star of David and says: “Young man. Don’t you realize that this is a Catholic country? You’ll never get any contributions in this country holding a Star of David.” And he walks off.

The man with the Star of David turns to the man with the cross and says: “Moishe, can you imagine, this guy is trying to tell us how to run our business?”

Reverend Jim, an avid golfer, found himself with a few hours to spare one afternoon last week. He figured if he hurried and played very fast, he could get in 9 holes before he had to head home. Just as he was about to tee off, an old gentleman shuffled onto the tee and asked if he could accompany Jim as he was golfing alone. Not being able to say no, he allowed the old man to join him. To Jim’s surprise, the old man played fairly quickly. He didn’t hit the ball far, but plodded along consistently and didn’t waste much time.

Finally, they reached the 9th fairway and Jim found himself with a tough shot. There was a large pine tree right in front of his ball and directly between his ball and the green. After several minutes of debating how to hit the shot, the old man finally said, “You know, when I was your age, I’d hit the ball right over that tree.”

With that challenge placed before him, Jim swung hard, hit the ball up, right smack into the top of the tree trunk and it thudded back on the ground not a foot from where it had originally lay. The old man offered one more comment, “Of course, when I was your age, that pine tree was only 3 feet tall.”

A dinner speaker was in such a hurry to get to his engagement that when he arrived and sat down at the head table, he suddenly realized that he had forgotten his false teeth. Turning to the man next to him he said, “I forgot my teeth.”

The man said, “No problem.” He reached into his pocket and pulled out a pair of false teeth. “Try these,” he said.

The speaker tried them. “Too loose,” he said.

The man then said, “I have another pair - try these.”

The speaker tried them and responded, “Too tight.”

The man said, “I have one more pair that you can try.”

The speaker said, “They fit perfectly.” With that he ate his meal and gave his speech.

After the dinner meeting was over, the speaker went over to thank the man who had helped him. “I want to thank you for coming to my aid. By the way, where is your office? I’ve been looking for a good dentist for quite a while.”

The man replied, “I’m not a dentist. I’m an undertaker.”

Adapt yourself to the environment in which your lot has been cast, and show true love to the fellow mortals with whom destiny has surrounded you.

Marcus Aurelius (121-180)

Noah had a real problem. It seems that with no flowers around, the bees were wreaking havoc with the larger animals on board. The harassment reached the point that Noah had to do something just to maintain peace. He decided to put the pesky bees into long term storage. That was when Noah invented the Ark Hive.

While in Chartres to see the famous Gothic cathedral there, Elizabeth mentioned that during both World Wars the exquisite stained glass windows were taken down piece by piece and stored to protect them from damage. Her husband, Greg instantly replied, "Wow! That must have been a very panes-taking process!"

In a large Florida city, the rabbi developed quite a reputation for his sermons; so much so that everyone in the community came every Sabbath.

Unfortunately, one weekend a member had to visit Long Island for his nephew's bar mitzvah. But he didn't want to miss the rabbi's sermon. So he decided to hire a Christian to sit in the congregation and tape the sermon so he could listen to it when he returned. Other congregates saw what was going on, and they also decided to hire Christians to tape the sermon so they could play golf instead of going to the synagogue.

Within a few weeks time there were 500 gentiles sitting in shul taping the rabbi. The rabbi got wise to this. The following Shabbos he, too, hired a Christian who brought a tape recorder to play his prerecorded sermon to the 500 gentiles in the congregation who dutifully recorded his words on their machines.

Witnesses said this marked the first incidence in history of artificial insermonation.

One Sunday a farmer went to church. When he entered, he saw that he and the preacher were the only ones present. The preacher asked the farmer if he wanted him to go ahead and preach. The farmer said, "I'm not too smart, but if I went to feed my cattle and only one showed up, I'd feed him." So the minister began his sermon.

One hour passed, then two, then two-and-a-half hours. The preacher finally finished and came down to ask the farmer how he liked the sermon. The farmer answered slowly, "Well, I'm not very smart, but if I went to feed my cattle and only one showed up, I sure wouldn't feed him all the hay."

Dan Hughes, a fellow fanatic Old Time Radio show collector, told me of a conversation he once had with Parley Baer. Baer was a famous actor with many film and radio credits, including Chester on radio's "Gunsmoke" opposite William Conrad (later TV's "Cannon") as Matt Dillon. Here's Dan's true story:

"A few years ago I had the opportunity to chat with Parley Baer, and he told me that before he became an actor he was a radio studio engineer at KSL-Salt Lake City, the home of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, whose broadcasts were heard around the nation on the CBS radio network. Parley

worked on the Mormon Tabernacle Choir broadcasts with two other audio engineers, and though Utah is Latter Day Saints country, none of these three engineers were Mormons. Parley's punch line: 'So what the nation didn't know is that the Mormon broadcast they heard every Sunday morning was brought to them courtesy of a Jew, a Protestant, and a Catholic.'"

While walking along the sidewalk in front of his church, our minister heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt. Apparently, his five-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead robin. Feeling that proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton batting, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased. The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with sonorous dignity intoned his version of what he thought his father always said: "Glory be unto the Faaaather....and unto the sonnnand into the hole he gooooes."

"Never put a period where God has already placed a comma." - Gracie Allen

A kindergartner was practising spelling with magnetic letters on the refrigerator: cat, dog, dad, and mom had been proudly displayed for all to see. One morning while getting ready for the day, he bounded into the room with his arms outstretched. In his hands were three magnetic letters: G-O-D. "Look what I spelled, Mom!" with a proud smile on his face.

"That's wonderful!" his mom praised him. "Now go put them on the fridge so Dad can see when he gets home tonight." The mom happily thought that her son's Catholic education was certainly having an impact.

Just then, a little voice called from the kitchen: "Mom? How do you spell 'zilla'?"

Discovering too late that a watermelon spiked with vodka had accidentally been served to a luncheon meeting of local ministers, the restaurant's owner waited nervously for the clerics' reaction. "Quick, man," he whispered to the waiter, "what did they say?" "Nothing," replied the waiter. "They were all too busy slipping the seeds into their pockets."

A kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they drew. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's artwork. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "but no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

The Pope, Billy Graham, and Oral Roberts were in a three-way plane crash over the Atlantic Ocean. They all arrived the Pearly Gates together.

"Oh! This is terrible!" exclaimed St. Peter. "I know you guys think that we summoned you here, but this is just one of those coincidences that happen. We were going to help all of you land once you got where you were going." St. Peter was fretting. "Your quarters just aren't ready. We can't take you in, but we can't send you back."

Then he got an idea. He picked up the phone, "Lucifer, this is Pete. Hey, I got these three guys up here. They're ours, but we weren't expecting them and we gotta fix the place up for 'em. I was hoping you could put them up for a while. It'll only be a couple of days. I'll owe you one."

Reluctantly, the devil agreed.

Two days later...

"Pete, this is Lucifer. Hey, you gotta come get these three clowns."

"What's wrong?" asked St. Peter.

"Well, this Pope guy is forgiving everybody. This Graham fellow is saving everybody. And this fella Roberts -- he's raising money to buy a central air conditioning unit ..."

A rich American tourist was holidaying in Rome, and was intent on seeing the Pope. There he stood, in a big long queue with a rather expensive suit on, hoping the Pope would notice how smart he was and perhaps talk a few words with him.

As the Pope made his way slowly down the queue, he walked right past the American, hardly even noticing him. The Pope then stopped next to a low-life sot, leaned over and whispered something in the sot's ear, and made his way on again.

This really angered the American. After speaking with the drunkard, the American agreed to pay 1000 dollars to exchange clothing, in the hope that the Pope would speak to him the next day.

The next morning the American stood in the queue, waiting to see the Pope and hopefully exchange a few words. The Pope was making his way slowly up to the American. When he finally reached him, he leaned over to the American and spoke softly into his ear ...

"I thought I told you to get lost."

There once was a young woman who went to confession. Upon entering the confessional she said, "Forgive me Father, for I have sinned."

The priest said, "Confess your sins and be forgiven."

The young woman said, "Last night my boyfriend made mad passionate love to me seven times."

The priest thought long and hard and then said, "Squeeze seven lemons into a glass and then drink the juice."

The young woman asked, "Will this cleanse me of my sins?"

The Priest said "No, but it will wipe that smile off of your face."

Ducking into confession with a turkey in his arms, Brian said, "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. I stole this turkey to feed my family. Would you take it and assuage my guilt?"

"Certainly not," said the Priest. "As penance, you must return it to the one from whom you stole it."

"I tried," Brian sobbed, "but he refused. Oh, Father, what should I do?"

"If what you say is true, then it is all right for you to keep it for your family."

Thanking the Priest, Brian hurried off.

When confession was over, the Priest returned to his residence. When he walked into the kitchen, he found that someone had stolen his Christmas turkey.

A newly ordained preacher and his young wife were talking about being more considerate of each

other. The good wife promised that she would stop being so critical of his sleep-inducing sermons. He, in return, promised to honor her privacy and stop looking through her dresser drawers. The preacher was true to his word, and never looked through his wife's dresser drawers; the good wife was never openly critical of her husband's sermons; and their marriage progressed smoothly.

After 50 years, their children gave a great party to celebrate the golden anniversary of the preacher and his wife. Many people came to congratulate the happy couple, and brought lovely gifts.

That evening, as they were putting the gifts away, the preacher saw that his wife had left one dresser drawer slightly open. He tried as hard as he could to withstand the temptation, but he finally opened the drawer and looked inside. There he found 3 eggs, and \$10,000.00, in bills of varied denominations. He was greatly puzzled by this, and went to question his wife.

"Oh," she said. "Well, you remember when we spoke of being more considerate with each other all those years ago?"

The preacher, feeling profoundly guilty, answered "yes."

"Well," she continued, "I promised to stop criticizing your boring sermons, but every time you gave a sermon that was a real snoozer, I put an egg into that drawer."

The preacher smiled. "Well, that's not so bad. 50 years of sermons and only 3 eggs! But what about all that money?"

His wife quietly responded, "Every time I got a dozen eggs, I sold them."

An ad for St. Joseph's Episcopal Church has a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed and a headline that reads, "For fast, fast, fast relief, take two tablets."

The Sunday school teacher was carefully explaining the story of Elijah the Prophet and the false prophets of Baal. She explained how Elijah built the altar, put wood upon it, cut the steer in pieces and laid it upon the altar. And then Elijah commanded the people of God to fill four barrels of water and pour it over the altar. He had them do this four times. "Now, said the teacher, "can anyone in the class tell me why the Lord would have Elijah pour water over the steer on the altar?" A little girl in the back of the room raised her hand with great enthusiasm. "To make the gravy," came her enthusiastic reply.

One day while walking down the street a highly successful executive woman was tragically hit by a bus and she died. Her soul arrived up in heaven where she was met at the Pearly Gates by St. Peter himself.

"Welcome to Heaven," said St. Peter. "Before you get settled in though, it seems we have a problem. You see, strangely enough, we've never once had an executive make it this far and we're not really sure what to do with you."

"No problem, just let me in." said the woman.

"Well, I'd like to, but I have higher orders. What we're going to do is let you have a day in Hell and a day in Heaven and then you can choose whichever one you want to spend an eternity in."

“Actually, I think I’ve made up my mind...I prefer to stay in Heaven”, said the woman.

“Sorry, we have rules...” And with that St. Peter put the executive in an elevator and it went down-down-down to hell.

The doors opened and she found herself stepping out onto the putting green of a beautiful golf course. In the distance was a country club and standing in front of her were all her friends - fellow executives that she had worked with and they were all dressed in evening gowns and cheering for her. They ran up and kissed her on both cheeks and they talked about old times. They played an excellent round of golf and at night went to the country club where she enjoyed an excellent steak and lobster dinner. She met the Devil who was actually a really nice guy (kinda cute) and she had a great time telling jokes and dancing. She was having such a good time that before she knew it, it was time to leave. Everybody shook her hand and waved good- bye as she got on the elevator.

The elevator went up-up-up and opened back up at the Pearly Gates and found St. Peter waiting for her. “Now it’s time to spend a day in heaven,” he said. So she spent the next 24 hours lounging around on clouds and playing the harp and singing. She had a great time and before she knew it her 24 hours were up and St. Peter came and got her.

“So, you’ve spent a day in hell and you’ve spent a day in heaven. Now you must choose your eternity,” he said.

The woman paused for a second and then replied, “Well, I never thought I’d say this, I mean, Heaven has been really great and all, but I think I had a better time in Hell.”

So St. Peter escorted her to the elevator and again she went down-down-down back to Hell. When the doors of the elevator opened she found herself standing in a desolate wasteland covered in garbage and Filth. She saw her friends were dressed in rags and were picking up the garbage and putting it in sacks. The Devil came up to her and put his arm around her. “I don’t understand,” stammered the woman, “yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and a country club and we ate lobster and we danced and had a great time. Now all there is a wasteland of garbage and all my friends look miserable.”

The Devil looked at her and smiled. “Yesterday we were recruiting you; today you’re staff!”

As soon as she had finished convent school, a bright young girl named Lena shook the dust of Ireland off her shoes and made her way to New York where before long, she became a successful performer in show business.

Eventually she returned to her home town for a visit and on a Saturday night went to confession in the church, which she had always attended as a child. In the confessional Father Sullivan recognized her and began asking her about her work. She explained that she was an acrobatic dancer, and he wanted to know what that meant.

She said she would be happy to show him the kind of thing she did on stage. She stepped out of the confessional and within sight of Father Sullivan, she went into a series of

cartwheels, leaping splits, handsprings and backflips.

Kneeling near the confessional, waiting their turn, were two middle-aged ladies. They witnessed Lena's acrobatics with wide eyes, and one said to the other: "Will you just look at the penance Father Sullivan is givin' out this night, and me without me bloomers on!"

On the outskirts of town, there was a big old butternut tree by the cemetery fence. One day two kids filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing them. "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me," said the boy. Several were dropped and rolled down toward the gate.

Another boy came riding along the road on his bicycle. As he passed, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough, he heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me."

He just knew what it was. "Oh my," he shuddered, "it's Satan and the Lord dividing the souls at the cemetery." He jumped back on his bike and rode off. Just around the bend he met an old man with a cane, hobbling along. "Come here quick," said the boy, "you won't believe what I heard. Satan and the Lord are down at the cemetery dividing up the souls!"

The man said, "Beat it, kid, can't you see it's hard for me to walk?" When the boy insisted, the man hobbled to the cemetery. Standing by the fence they heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me." The old man whispered, "Boy, you've been tellin' the truth, let's see if we can see the devil himself."

Shaking with fear, they peered through the gate, yet were still unable to see anything. The old man and the boy gripped the wrought iron bars of the gate tighter and tighter as they tried to get a glimpse of Satan. At last they heard, "One for you, one for me. And one last one for you. That's all. Now let's go get those nuts by the gate, and we'll be done."

They say that the old guy made it back to town before the boy!

The minister and the church board called a special meeting of the congregation to explain some desperate needs of the building that had to be fixed before winter set in - roof, boiler, etc. "The board approved that we should take a special offering today to get these repairs underway right away. As they pass the plates to you, I promise that the one who gives the greatest offering will be allowed to pick 3 hymns for next week's service."

The plates were passed and brought to the minister, who discovered a \$1,000 bill on top. "Oh my!, how wonderful! Who gave this \$1,000 bill?"

A little old lady in the back shyly raised her hand. "Oh Mabel, how generous you are! How blessed we are! Come up and let us thank you!"

When Mabel got to the front with all the applause of the congregation, the minister invited her to

select the hymns she wanted.

Mabel slowly turned around to face the congregation, stretched out her arm and said, "I pick him! And him! And him!"

A man had a habit of grumbling at the food his wife placed before him at family meals. Then he would ask the blessing. One day after his usual combination complaint-prayer, his little girl asked, "Daddy, does God hear us when we pray?"

"Why, of course," he replied. "He hears us every time we pray."

She thought on this a moment, and asked, "Does he hear everything we say the rest of the time?"

"Yes, dear, every word," he replied, encouraged that he had inspired his daughter to be curious about spiritual matters.

However, his pride was quickly turned to humility when she asked: "Then which does God believe?"

A young lady came home from a date, rather sad. She told her mother, "Jeff proposed to me an hour ago."

"Then why are you so sad?" her mother asked.

"Because he also told me he was an atheist. Mom, he doesn't even believe there's a hell."

Her mother replied, "Marry him anyway. Between the two of us, we'll show him how wrong he is."

Way down south, there's a Baptist minister of a large congregation.

One morning after a particularly moving sermon, he says, "Friends, I have been hearing nasty rumours!" The crowd falls into an expectant silence. "One of you, my faithful followers, has been saying that I am a member of the Ku Klux Klan. This is not true! I am now asking that the guilty party confess and apologize here before my flock."

Just then Sister Margaret stood up and said, "Preacher, I don't know how this came to be. All I said was that you're a wizard under the sheets."

A Catholic minister went into deepest Africa in an attempt to work with and convert a tribe to the Catholic religion. He wasn't able to speak the language very well, so he asked a member of the tribe to help translate what he wanted to say. He received permission from the Chief of the tribe to speak to the whole tribal population at once. The minister stood atop a very large boulder, and as he spoke, the translator translated all that the minister was saying.

"If you let me, I will show you how to dig in the ground and get good water with which to drink and cook."

"Hoon-gow-wa," was the large response from the tribes-people.

"I can show you how you can capture animals without leaving your village."

"Hoon-gow-wa!" shouted all the tribe. (By this time, the minister was very happy with his effort)

“And if you will let me, I will show you a way to make peace with the other tribes that are trying to take your land and your women.”

“HOON-GOW-WA!!” was the enormous response, so loud that it scared away the birds in the nearby trees. This was the end of his talk and he thanked the tribe for allowing him to speak to them. Then followed was a large feast and dancing.

Later that afternoon, the translator came up to the minister and said, “The chief of our people said that you have given him much joy. As a sign of his appreciation, he would like to take you on a tour of animals and tribal land.”

Well, the Minister was absolutely delighted at the acceptance that he had been shown. He thanked the chief and told him that he felt honoured by his offer.

So the chief, minister, translator, and four warriors went walking through the small kingdom. As the Chief gave the minister the guided tour, the translator explained the different places that the Chief was showing the minister: the large sparkling stream that was their water source, and a large area bountiful in deer and elk that provided their meat supply.

After another hour of walking, as the party came on a large lush green pasture that looked to have about 100 cows (to the best guess of the Minister), the Chief said something to the translator and pointed toward the ground.

The Minister inquired what the chief had said.

The translator replied, “My Chief tells you to watch your step on this path, and to be careful not to step in the Hoon-Gow-Wa.”

Overheard in a bar:

“Earl I don’t mean to tell you that I believe or anything, it’s just that when I got home last Sunday morning, after being out drinking all of Saturday night, there wasn’t anybody on the TV except for some Bible-thumping preacher. I was getting ready to take a shower and go to bed when he starts shouting about healing people. He starts in about how if you’ll bring the afflicted part of you body up to touch the TV screen, kneel down and pray to Jesus then YOU’LL be HEALED.

“Now Earl, I still have my doubts, but my hemorrhoids haven’t bothered me all week.”

Found in a church bulletin: The congregation is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

The music for today’s service was all composed by George Friedrich Handel in celebration of the 300th anniversary of his birth.

Found in a church bulletin:

Hymn 43: “Great God, what do I see here?”

Sermon: The Rev. Horace Blodgett

Hymn 47: “Hark! An awful voice is sounding”

A singing group called “The Resurrection” was scheduled to sing at a church. When a big snowstorm postponed the performance, the pastor fixed the outside sign to read, “The Resurrection

is postponed.”

Found in a church bulletin during the minister's illness: God Is Good - Dr. Hargreaves is better.

A man who had worked his regular factory shift plus a second, back to back overnight shift, attended his Sunday church service before getting some much deserved sleep. He was fine until the priest presented a long, boring sermon in a very monotone voice. His fatigue caught up to him and finally, he fell asleep.

The priest has been watching him all along, and thought the man had a hangover. At the end of the sermon, the preacher decided to make an example of him.

He said to his congregation, “All those wishing to have a place in heaven, please stand.”

The whole room stood up except, of course, the sleeping man.

Then the preacher says even more loudly, “And he who would like to find a place in hell please STAND UP!”

The weary man, catching only the last part, groggily stood up, only to find that he was the only one standing. Confused and embarrassed he says, “I don't know what we're voting on here, Father, but it sure seems like you and me are the only ones standing for it!”

A very zealous soul-winning young preacher recently came upon a farmer working in his field. Being concerned about the farmer's soul the preacher asked the man, “Are you laboring in the vineyard of the Lord my good man?”

Not even looking at the preacher and continuing his work the farmer replied, “Naw, these are soybeans.”

“You don't understand,” said the preacher. “Are you a Christian?”

With the same amount of interest as his previous answer the farmer said, “Nope my name is Jones. You must be lookin for Jim Christian. He lives a mile south of here.”

The young determined preacher tried again asking the farmer, “Are you lost?”

“Naw! I've lived here all my life,” answered the farmer.

“Are you prepared for the resurrection?” the frustrated preacher asked.

This caught the farmer's attention and he asked, “When's it gonna be?”

Thinking he had accomplished something the young preacher replied, “It could be today, tomorrow, or the next day.”

Taking a handkerchief from his back pocket and wiping his brow, the farmer remarked, “Well, don't mention it to my wife. She don't get out much and she'll wanna go all three days.”

A clergyman walking down a country lane and sees a young farmer struggling to load hay back onto a cart after it had fallen off.

“You look hot, my son,” said the cleric. “why don't you rest a moment, and I'll give you a hand.”

“No thanks,” said the young man.

“My father wouldn't like it.”

“Don't be silly,” the minister said.

“Everyone is entitled to a break. Come and have a drink of water.”

Again the young man protested that his father would be upset. Losing his patience, the clergyman said, "Your father must be a real slave driver. Tell me where I can find him and I'll give him a piece of my mind!"

"Well," replied the young farmer, "he's under the load of hay."

During a dinner party, the hosts' two little children entered the dining room totally nude and walked slowly around the table. The parents were so embarrassed that they pretended nothing was happening and kept the conversation going. The guests cooperated and also continued as if nothing extraordinary was happening. There was a moment of silence at the table, during which one child was heard to say, "You see, it *IS* vanishing cream!"

An archaeologist was digging in the Negev Desert in Israel and came upon a casket containing a mummy. After examining it, he called the curator of a prestigious natural history museum. "I've just discovered a 3,000 year old mummy of a man who died of heart failure!" the excited scientist exclaimed.

The curator replied, "Bring him in. We'll check it out." A week later, the amazed curator called the archaeologist. "You were right about the mummy's age and cause of death. How in the world did you know?"

"Easy. There was a piece of paper in his hand that said, '10,000 Shekels on Goliath'."

A lady lost her handbag in the bustle of Christmas shopping. It was found by an honest little boy and returned to her. Looking in her purse, she commented, "Hmmm . . . that's funny. When I lost my bag there was a \$20 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1 bills."

The boy quickly replied, "That's right, lady. The last time I found a lady's purse, she didn't have any change for a reward."

A priest was vested in his surplice and cassock ready to proceed at the beginning of the service. His surplice was very ornate, and he was swinging the incense pot which had smoke coming from it. A lady touched him on the shoulder and said, "Darling, I love your dress, but your purse is on fire!"

There was this lady who was visiting a church one Sunday. The sermon seemed to go on forever, and many in the congregation fell asleep. After the service, to be social, she walked up to a very sleepy looking gentleman, extended her hand in greeting, and said, "Hello, I'm Gladys Dunn." And the gentleman replied, "You're not the only one ma'am, I'm glad he's done too!!!"

A woman from Brooklyn who, on her 80th birthday, decided to prepare her last will and testament. She went to her minister to make two final requests. First, she insisted on cremation. "What is your second request?" the minister asked.

"I want my ashes scattered over the Bloomingdale's store."

"Why Bloomingdale's?"

"Then I'll be sure that my daughters visit me twice a week," she replied.

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan, in which a man was beaten, robbed and left for dead. She described the situation in vivid detail so her students would catch the drama. Then she asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence. "I think I'd throw up."

In the middle of a forest, there was a hunter who was suddenly confronted by a huge, mean bear. In his fear, all attempts to shoot the bear were unsuccessful. Finally, he turned and ran as fast as he could. The hunter ran and ran and ran, until he ended up at the edge of a very steep cliff. His hopes were dim. Seeing no way out of his predicament, and with the bear closing in rather quickly, the hunter got down on his knees, opened his arms, and exclaimed, "Dear God! Please give this bear some *religion*!"

The skies darkened and there was lightning in the air. Just a few feet short of the hunter, the bear came to abrupt stop, and glanced around, somewhat confused. Suddenly, the bear looked up into the sky and said, "Thank you, God, for the food I'm about to receive...."

An expectant mother was being rushed to the hospital, but didn't quite make it. She gave birth to her baby on the hospital lawn. Later, the father received a bill, listing "Delivery Room Fee: \$500." He wrote the hospital and reminded them the baby was born on the front lawn.

A week passed, and a corrected bill arrived: "Greens Fee: \$200."

Three small boys were bragging about their fathers. The first boasted that his dad owned a farm. The second said his dad owned a factory. The third boy, a pastor's son, replied: "That's nothin'. My dad owns hell."

"No way," another boy scoffed. "How can a man own hell?"

"Sure he can," the preacher's son said. "My mom told my grandma that them elders of our church gave it to him last night."

The mother of three notoriously unruly youngsters was asked whether or not she'd have children if she had it to do over again. "Sure," she replied, "but not the same ones."

The young ladies were taking their final vows to become nuns at the Mass. The presiding bishop noticed two rabbis seated at the back of the sanctuary. They'd insisted on sitting on the right side of the centre aisle. The bishop was curious why they'd come, but didn't have time to ask. He went ahead and started the ceremony. Later, when it was time for announcements, the bishop went back to where the rabbis sat. "I'm delighted to see you both here and thank you for coming. But I'm a little curious as to why you're present on this occasion where these young women are becoming 'Brides of Christ'." The more senior of the rabbis smiled, rose to his feet, and explained, "We're 'Family of the Groom'."

The teacher of the third-grade Sunday School class was planning to take her charges on a "field trip"

to the ongoing church service, so they could get an idea of what morning worship looked like. Before they left their classroom, she thought it would be a good idea to caution them against being boisterous in those surroundings. Attempting to engage their attention, she asked, "And why do we need to be quiet in church?" One bright little scholar replied right away, "Because people are sleeping in there."

"I know I'm nuts...but as long as I make 'em laugh they're not gonna lock me up." -- Red Skelton

A nervous young minister, new to the church, told the flock, "For my text today, I will take the words, 'And they fed five men with five thousand loaves of bread and two thousand fishes.'"

A member of the flock snickered at the preacher's snafu, raised his hand and said, "That's not much of a trick. I could do that."

The minister didn't respond. However, the next Sunday he decided to repeat the text. This time he did it properly, "And they fed five thousand men with five loaves of bread and two fishes." Smiling, the minister said to the noisy man, "Could you do that, Mr. Perkins?"

The member of the flock said, "I sure could."

"How would you do it?"

"With all the food I had left over from last Sunday!"
