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How are you?
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How
Are
You?

Presenting Nurse Patley and
a Life-giving Apostolate

by
Alberta Schumacher

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100-100

How Are You?

"*How am I?*" Ellen Patley pinched her arm and said flatly in answer to Betty's question, "I think I'm dead. I don't feel a thing."

"Ellen, what's got into you? You don't take any interest in life. Don't you care about anything at all?" pert Betty Conroy demanded.

"Care?" There was a lost look for a minute in Ellen's clear gray eyes behind the modishly styled glasses. "Yes, I suppose I care deep down inside. But it hurts to care, so I keep suppressing my feelings."

"But you've got everything," Betty said. "You're so far above me, and all the doctors think you are tops and . . ."

"All the doctors," Ellen smiled faintly, "but you don't find any special one of them taking an interest in me. Not that it would need to be a doctor," Ellen added wryly. "A bricklayer or ditch-digger might do."

"Ellen Patley, you want to get married!" Betty said, wide-eyed. "Then why don't you?"

"You can ask that at twenty," Ellen said. "At twenty-nine you lose confidence."

"Ellen, you ought to be pretty," Betty said slowly, "but for some reason you just

miss the mark a little. I have it. Take off those glasses."

Ellen took off the glasses and pushed her dark hair back from her face. She was slim and trim and her features were regular. Betty shook her head though. "It's more than the glasses, and yet you have good skin and eyes and . . ."

"Let's find out what it is I don't have," Ellen said impatiently, wondering meanwhile why she was indulging herself in such inane chit-chat anyway. Maybe it was because she had a soft spot in her heart for young Betty. Betty had the kind of personality she admired, but had never achieved, a sort of out-going warmth that genuinely attracted others.

As if in echo to her own thoughts Betty formed the word "warmth" with her wide mouth that was usually turned up in a gamin grin.

"Warmth," Ellen echoed stupidly. "Yes, maybe that's it, Betty. I told you I don't feel a thing. I think I'm dead."

"Here, here, who's dead this morning?"

"Oh, Father Andrew. You heard us. I'm dead, if you must know," and cool, habitually composed Ellen Patley turned and rushed down the hall with tears in her eyes.

"Please excuse Ellen," Betty pleaded earnestly. "She just isn't feeling . . ." Betty had been going to say feeling well, but she stopped right there at feeling, because that was the real truth, and Betty was a painfully truthful person.

"Maybe I could help if you told me a little more about this," Father said kindly. "Miss Patley is a fine young woman, but I have often suspected something lacking in her life in the way of happiness."

Betty did her best to describe Ellen's undeveloped warmth of heart that forever vied with the coldness she had created by long practice as a kind of shell to protect the tenderness inside.

"Hmm, that's bad," Father said seriously. "First thing you know the coldness will begin spreading inside, too. Worst thing in the world for a person to concentrate on herself and her own hurts and shut herself away from the hurts of other people. Odd that a nurse should do that, especially a splendid nurse like Miss Patley. I wonder if we stress the spiritual side of nursing enough."

"The spiritual side, Father?"

"Yes, the giving of heart and soul as well as time and labor. No one is ever happy who merely serves with his hands. There has to be heart behind it, heart enough to melt the starch if needs be."

"Father Andrew, you do say the cleverest things. Melt the starch—that's cute."

"I am not trying to be cute, young lady. I am in dead earnest. Tell you what—I'll make it a point to talk to Miss Patley some time soon myself. In the meantime I'll be thinking of her and just

what would be the best approach to draw her out of herself."

"Oh, Father Andrew, here is a letter you missed." The young and pretty girl at the desk brought a small, unimpressive envelope to him. Father opened it without enthusiasm. Out tumbled a selection of three or four little cards with the title, *My Daily Prayer*. Father looked inside the one that was made in the form of a little folder. Then he glanced at the back. "Hmm, no Imprimatur. Prayers are Catholic though. Let me see now. He held up the leaflet of explanation that had come with the cards. *The Apostolate To Assist Dying Non-Catholics*—oh yes, I've heard of that. I believe the Imprimatur is left off with special permission from ecclesiastical authorities. That's all right." He turned a few pages. "Yes, here it says so at the bottom of the page. You know, it's strange we have never tried this Apostolate here in our hospital."

"Too busy scrubbing floors and sterilizing equipment," Betty said practically.

Father faced her sternly. "Young woman, when scrubbing floors and sterilizing equipment become more important to you than your patients' souls, you are out of balance. And come to think of it, that may be just the trouble with Miss Patley. She needs a little more spiritual endeavor to balance up with the physical."

"But Miss Patley is an exemplary person. Everyone says so," Betty said almost indignantly.

“ ‘Without charity . . . tinkling brass . . . ’ ” Father was mumbling to himself.

“What, Father?”

“Oh, nothing, Betty. You run along now. I have some work to do, and I don’t want to keep you from yours.”

“I can take a hint, Father Andrew,” Betty said demurely, and walked away with the crisp rustling sound peculiar to nurses.

Father Andrew took his letter to the reception room and dropped into a comfortable chair to do some thinking. Ellen Patley. A lovely woman, in a chilly sort of way. Just the person to take charge of the Apostolate. It would take her mind off herself, and maybe help her to defrost a little. She stood a good chance of becoming self-centered in self-defense at this rate.

There were many nurses who remained single for love of God and fellow man, and devoted their lives to duty. That was the catch though. Somehow he doubted that love of fellow man in Miss Patley. She probably had it tucked away in her inhibited mind somewhere, but what good was love if you didn’t bring it out into the open to inspire loving service. Service with a heart—not just an efficient smile.

I wonder, Father mused, if Ellen is the type for a life of single blessedness. Such a life is either heroic or frustrated. Well,

I can plant the seeds of the Apostolate in her mind and see what happens.

Before the day passed Father Andrew managed a private talk with Ellen Patley. He had in the meantime studied the explanation leaflet that came with the prayer cards, so he was prepared to "brief her" on the history and accomplishments of the great work started by Right Reverend Monsignor Raphael J. Markham.

"That Monsignor Markham," Father Andrew smiled at Miss Patley. "A priest I knew quite well had the pleasure of meeting him once. He was most astounded. The great man for all the dignity of his vocation and the reputation he has achieved with his prayer cards is as simple and cheerful as a child, always ready with a little joke, never overly pious and sanctimonious. My friend said he fairly exudes a warmth of spirit that is apparent to all with whom he comes in contact."

"Warmth," Miss Patley repeated. "Warmth."

"Eh? Did you say something, Ellen?"

Ellen flushed. "I just said the word warmth, Father. I admire people with warmth of personality so much. It must be a God-given grace."

"It can be acquired," Father assured her. "It isn't hard at all."

"It's hard for people like me who keep themselves all bottled up inside. It's easy for you extrovert personalities to talk. It just comes natural to you."

"I wonder," Father said with a far-away look in his eyes. "You know, when I was a little boy I was most timid, and you know what happens to timid little boys. The other boys pick on them. Of course that makes them more timid than ever. A shrewd nun who taught me in the third grade gave me a job to do for her. That job was to be responsible for a rather backward lad who had extreme difficulty learning. In fact, he had extreme difficulty in everything. He needed special help all along the way. You know, Ellen, I forgot all about myself in helping that boy who was less fortunate than I. As soon as I forgot about myself in service to another I got over being timid. I made friends and my whole life changed."

"I thought I was giving good service to my patients," Ellen Patley said stiffly. "I wait on them hand and foot. I don't know what more I could do."

"Now, see, Ellen? I brushed that chip on your shoulder. You go around expecting to be hurt and take everything people say the wrong way. I was just using myself to get across the point. Poor taste, I guess, but that's the egotist in me. Always projecting myself into the story. I can understand you, Ellen, because fundamentally we started out with similar personalities. The only difference is that I was fortunate enough to come under the control of that wise nun who taught me

service without self—while you have traveled alone without help.”

“Yes, I have traveled alone,” Ellen said thoughtfully.

“But not from choice?”

Ellen stiffened, but there was only kindly concern in Father’s eyes, so she didn’t take offense.

Father Andrew hurried back to the subject of the Apostolate in order to alleviate her embarrassment. I’m getting to be worse than a meddling old woman, he accused himself. To Ellen he said, “I think you are just the person to influence the other nurses to work for the Apostolate, and to go ahead with it yourself. I shall order the cards for you girls, and then you can get them from me. Will you try it?”

Ellen nodded. “Yes, Father. And may I have the leaflet to study? I do think it is a wonderful work. You can count on me to do my best.”

“Yes, you always do that. That is just what I am counting on,” Father smiled.

Father Andrew mailed his order for prayer cards to the address given on the leaflet, and received his order promptly. Each nurse took a hundred cards and promised to place them in the hands of her patients and encourage them to read the printed prayers sincerely and devoutly every day, even many times a day.

Ellen had tried in the past to school herself against thinking too much about her patients’ personal lives. She had

rendered to their physical needs and sought to put all else out of her mind. Mostly this was because if she let herself go she could feel their pain and suffer their anguish right along with them. This was true particularly in the case of those without God in their lives.

Now, however, she found herself seeking to know more about them because she had a definite purpose in mind of helping them. Empty-handed it had all seemed so futile. With a prayer card to hand to the unfortunate and a prayer to be said in secret—well, life was looking up for Ellen Patley.

The very first person to whom she gave one of the prayer cards was an old lady, a cancer case, and hopeless. Hopeless? Once Ellen Patley would have flinched at the thought of a hopeless patient. Now she knew hopeless referred only to life on this earth. She had in her possession little cards of hope for a life without pain, a life-after-death.

“What is it, dear?” the frail old voice quavered.

Ellen looked down at sunken eyes and emaciated features. It is not a pretty thing to watch a person die a little each day. It is a wonderful thing though to watch a person begin to live a little more each day. Ellen entreated the dying woman to take time each day to read the prayers on the card fervently. That was when the woman began living a little

more each day—after she had taken Ellen's suggestion to heart.

Ellen prayed earnestly many times a day for her patient. It takes but a second to breathe an ejaculation, to whisper a Hail Mary, to make the Sign of the Cross. This, of course, was the very soul of the Apostolate into which Ellen was putting so much of herself.

"How is your patient in 301, Ellen?" one of the interns asked about a week after Ellen had given the woman the card.

"Oh, fine—she's just fine, Doctor!"

The intern looked at her as if she had taken leave of her senses. "Are you feeling quite well, Ellen? Everybody knows that woman is hanging to life by a thread . . ."

Ellen was already moving on down the corridor. She was so busy these days she had little time to make small talk. That phrase "hanging to life by a thread" remained in her mind though. Was the woman hanging to spiritual life by a thread, too? She certainly was praying from her card—and her heart—with regularity. I wonder if she has ever been baptized, Ellen mused. If she is making an Act of Perfect Contrition she is safe with Baptism of Desire, but how can I be sure she is not making just an Act of Attrition, which would not be sufficient to save her. I'm going to find out about her if I have to take time out from my other duties.

Ellen did find out about poor dying Mrs. Grayson. She had never been baptized and knew nothing about the necessity of Baptism. This was indeed the type of person the Apostolate was seeking to reach. Still, Ellen was of a cautious nature. If she could get her patient to go one step farther she would be more sure of her eternal salvation.

Quietly, painstakingly she told her patient all about Baptism. When she had finished the old lady smiled tremulously. "I wonder if you could arrange for me to be Baptized . . . all the time I've been praying from this card I have had a desire for just a little more . . ."

Ellen took this statement very much to heart. Was this the working of grace? What wonders these little cards were! The other nurses, too, had noted the individuality of their effect. Different patients reacted in different degrees of spiritual fervor. Well, the Good Lord knew what He was doing. He knew the individual soul.

Ellen at once arranged a time for her patient to be baptized. As it turned out, it was a most opportune time. The night of the same day Mrs. Grayson drew her last suffering breath. The one thing to which she held fast was the little prayer card that had led to her Baptism.

Young Doctor Mark Handley who was with Mrs. Grayson at the last was amazed to see how radiant Ellen Patley looked. "You must be getting hardened to death,"

he said. "You act downright happy about the whole thing. Or is it that you are relieved to see her free of pain?"

"Oh, Doctor Mark, it's more than that, so much more than that. She's my first one, my very first one, and I am so sure she will be praying for me in heaven the rest of my life. You know about the prayer cards, of course."

"How could I help but know with all the nurses buzzing about their extra-curricular assignment, if you will pardon my levity about such a very serious matter!"

"Extra-curricular, Doctor Mark? I think this Apostolate is the greatest work we can do. Tending their sick bodies ranks second to tending their sick souls."

"I never noticed how pretty you were before, Ellen. What have you done to yourself? Have you been taking one of those charm school courses? Oh, I read the ads in the magazines," he chuckled. "Let me see now, you haven't changed the style of your hair, or have you?"

"As if you would notice if I had," Ellen teased as they walked down the corridor together.

"Well, if I haven't noticed before I've been a fool," Doctor Mark declared emphatically. "What color are your eyes, Ellen? Let me see."

"Sorry, Doctor Mark. I have a date in the Chapel."

"A date, Ellen?"

“Yes, I have a thank-you to say for a soul saved.”

“Oh, that kind of date. Tell me, Ellen, do you have the other kind of date? Do you have a steady?”

“One date at a time,” Ellen smiled, and headed for the Chapel. Once inside she knelt in the dim light and poured out her heart and soul. “I have found what I needed,” she whispered to the One who is always listening.

In the weeks that followed other nurses reported similar success in their work for the Apostolate. Ellen branched out in a little experiment of her own. She gave one of the prayer cards to the visiting wife of one of her patients, a man who was convalescing from an uncomplicated appendectomy.

“Oh, for me?” the very attractive young woman exclaimed. “But why for me?”

This was an unexpected question, and for just a moment Ellen was taken aback. Then the words on the back of the card came to her mind. “Because you are a dear child of God,” she said simply, “and because you have been most kind to me. To make up for this cross bear of a husband of yours!” she added jokingly, trying not to appear over-pious and offensive. She hoped she had not sounded affected using that phrase, “dear child of God.” She could feel her face growing hot and she was glad to leave the room.

The young woman had not replied to the challenge of being a dear child of God.

Well, her husband is going home day after tomorrow, Ellen comforted herself. Maybe I kind of stuck my neck out, but surely nothing can be hurt by it.

Ellen considered herself quite fortunate to be occupied elsewhere the next day during visiting hours. When she finally did get back to her appendectomy patient though he informed her that his wife was most disappointed not to see her.

"Oh?" And that was all Ellen said, but she watched him out of the corner of her eye as she fixed his stand.

"She asked that you see her tomorrow when she comes to take me home. Something about the card you gave her . . ."

Ellen's hand flew to her throat. Something about the card! She hurried through her routine work in the man's room and fled to the Chapel for just a minute. There she prayed fervently for her patient's pretty young wife. The prayer said, she went back to her work, and she made of that a prayer, too, offering it that the woman might be given the grace to seek knowledge of the True Church.

Ellen was on pins and needles the next day till the man's wife came for him. When she finally got there she was all dressed up for the gala occasion of taking her practically as-good-as-new husband home. Mmm, but she smelled nice.

"Miss Patley," she said softly, "I'm so glad you are here today. I had to

thank you for that wonderful prayer card. It is just what I have been wanting, a brief prayer schedule, for each day, that is really complete and all-inclusive. This R. J. Markham whose name is on the back of the card—is he a preacher perhaps?”

“N-no,” Ellen said shakily. “Another unexpected development. There was certainly enough of the unforeseen and unwarned of in the booklet reaction to make working for the Apostolate a real adventure, a mystery even!

“I just thought he might be,” the young woman said. “What sect puts out the card? I think without a doubt whichever sect it is is the one I should join.”

Ellen gulped once, and then swallowed again—hard. “It isn’t a sect,” she said.

“No? Maybe a lodge or . . .”

This had gone far enough. I am no mouse, Ellen reminded herself severely. “The prayers are Catholic and it is the Right Reverend Raphael J. Markham who is the originator of the card.”

“Catholic!” the young woman gasped. But when she had recovered her composure, she added, “I won’t pretend I am not a bit flustered by this revelation. I am not going to let it prejudice me however. I certainly intend inquiring into the Catholic faith. If it lives up to this prayer card . . .”

Before the young couple left the hospital Ellen arranged a meeting with Father Andrew and left everything in his

capable hands. Her heart was singing a joyous tune. She had found a new use for the prayer cards, a wonderful use. Why did they call it the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics anyway? That limited its scope, and really there was no limit to it at all. It could be the Apostolate to Assist All Non-Catholics. Why, everywhere a person went she could carry a few of the cards with her and make opportunities to give them to those met along the way.

Why wait till a person is dying, Ellen asked inside herself. Why waste all those years. Why . . .

"Here, here, talking to yourself? That's a bad sign, Ellen, my girl—oops! what I said!"

"Doctor Mark! You frightened me."

"You don't look frightened. You look—Ellen, you look wonderful! How about that date tonight?"

"I heard that, Doctor Mark. You never ask me for dates. It's discrimination, that's what it is, and you the handsomest doc in the place. Ellen Patley, I thought you said no special one of them took an interest in you. Fibber!" Betty Conroy wrinkled up her nose at the two of them and then went on her way without waiting for an answer.

"What did she mean—no special one of them took an interest in you? No special one of what, whom, whomever . . ."

"Doctor Mark, you're crazy!" Ellen giggled.

“That’s what I’ve been telling myself. I’ve been crazy to waste all this time. I still want to know what you have done for yourself?”

Ellen shook her head—“Not for myself, Doctor Mark—for other people. What a difference it can make in a life to get the proper perspective on things.”

“I’m not sure you have the proper perspective yet, Ellen. You give no indication of it.”

“You’re not making yourself very clear, Doctor,” Ellen said demurely, but not coyly. Ellen would never be that.

Doctor Mark took a hasty look around to make sure no one would witness his breach of hospital etiquette. Then he put one sensitive finger under Ellen’s chin and lifted it till her gray eyes met his. “I mean you haven’t the proper perspective till I’m in the picture for you,” he said gravely. “Now, have you the proper perspective, Nurse Patley?”

Ellen took in the serious brown eyes, the nose with the ever-so-slight bump in the middle from an old football injury, and the wide, humorous mouth. An extrovert, she decided, but I could hit it off with an extrovert now. “I believe I do have the proper perspective, Doctor. But now I must get busy.”

“Tonight, Nurse Patley?”

“It’s a date.”

* * * *

"How am I? I'm glad you asked, Betty," Ellen Patley said the next morning. "I'm alive, completely alive, and it's wonderful!"

"Hey, I pinched you and you didn't yell ouch!" Betty chirped. "There's only one answer to that—you're in love!"

"In love with life," Ellen admitted.

"And Doctor Mark?"

"It's a little early to tell, but there are signs," Ellen grinned. Then she became serious. "But, Betty, I'm not joking when I say I'm in love with life, and helping others to life. Do you realize how many DP's there are?"

"Displaced persons, you mean, Ellen?"

"Yes, but not exactly what you mean, Betty. I mean the unfortunate masses of God's beloved children who are stranded without hope far from their Father's House, the One True Church. Some are in error; some are in entire disbelief. All are dear to God. All need our help."

"Just our help, Ellen? Do we nurses have to do it all?"

"Well, we nurses may be in the best position to aid more of the dying, but certainly there are plenty of people in even better positions to recruit souls for Christ from the hale and hearty non-Catholics they meet in their daily endeavors."

"For instance—waitresses!"

"That is right, Betty. Why, think how many people waitresses meet in a day. That gives me an idea. Why don't you and I eat at different restaurants now and

then when our pocketbooks will allow it, and when we leave our tip we can put it on one of the prayer cards. That way the waitress in the establishment will get the prayer card. She may become interested and in turn influence other people."

"But how would she know where to get cards? There isn't any address on the card," Betty said.

"That's right. There isn't. And we should not leave one of the instruction leaflets because if a non-Catholic read one of them she might be offended right at first because it was Catholic, and because someone was out to save her soul. It's queer how offended people can become by another's attempt to save their soul if the attempt is bungled."

"Bungled, Ellen?"

"Yes. Some people use no tact when they try to help others. Right away they seem over-bearing and patronizing. That's why the prayer card is the best method. You just give a person the card and ask him or her to read the prayers on it. You don't have to preach. You do your praying in secret. But—if you gave one of the explanatory leaflets to the person you would be bungling."

"Then how are we going to get waitresses to work for the apostolate? They have to know what it is all about first. They can be saved themselves by praying from the card, but without the proper information they cannot help others."

“Nothing truly good comes easy. It is up to us to contact a few Catholic waitresses and get them to work for the Apostolate. They in turn can contact other Catholic waitresses they know. But make no mistake, Betty, it is good just to place the card in the hand of the non-Catholic waitress. With the grace she receives from praying from the card she can be a wonderful Christ-like influence even though she does not work in a direct way for the Apostolate. The thing is, don't limit the effect of the Apostolate. Don't be content with just *what has been done*. Use your own creative ability. Think of new ways to enrich the world with the prayer cards.”

“Ellen Patley, you're not the same girl!” Betty sighed. “You're not the same girl at all. You have fire and imagination and . . .”

“Maybe a little more interest in the other fellow?” Ellen smiled as she said the words. “Oh, I have more ideas for the Apostolate. Now that I am seeing its potentialities outside the nursing field, too, I can't rest until I contact others who can spread the work. For instance, I met a most attractive young salesman at a friend's house last week. He was Catholic, but I gave him a card and an instruction leaflet. He was really enthusiastic. He is ordering cards and will place them at different stops he makes in his day's work.”

“Why, that’s wonderful!” Betty exclaimed. “We nurses have nothing on a salesman when it comes to getting around and meeting people.”

“Especially healthy, vital people who can carry the Apostolate farther and farther. Now you take a Catholic business man, for instance. Think how many employes he may have working for him. He could have one of the large cards for framing hung on the wall in each room. What stenographer does not stop to rest her eyes by looking away from her work? What if the framed card were handy and her eyes would naturally be directed toward it during rest periods?”

“Ellen, you are full of ideas. You put the rest of us nurses to shame. You know, I have a sister who works in a factory. She could take cards and leave them in the locker room. Any production worker could do that. And if you stay at a hotel some time you could leave cards in the room. A hotel maid could leave a card when she cleaned a room . . .”

“And you call me full of ideas!” Ellen laughed. “You know, speaking of hotels, you will find a Gideon Bible in a great many hotel rooms. I think a prayer card should be placed on top of that Bible. It might lead people to truth instead of error—with the grace of God.

“Say, think of all the tragic hotel fires there have been in recent years, Ellen. What a consolation those little prayer

cards would have been to people trapped in their rooms waiting for rescue."

"An airline stewardess would have an opportunity to work for the Apostolate. She could keep a supply of cards with her always. They would be a great comfort to passengers on their first air trip, and to anyone in time of stormy weather, too."

"Even to me in time of stormy weather," Betty admitted. "Ellen, I think Catholics should make use of the prayer card themselves. The prayers are so perfect and complete, and they take so little time. Still they are so wonderfully effective."

"I never thought of it before, but this is Christopher work at its best. These little prayer cards should be taken to every 'market place'. They are not to be confined to churches and places where the better people congregate. God goes seeking for the lost, and the Apostolate is that kind of work."

"Jane Lieter is mailing cards to soldiers. She sends the special soldier card, of course. It's real nice, I think, and waterproof, too. We could all follow her example. She has already received some wonderful letters from boys who received her cards. Jane says we should do all possible to keep Christ in the minds and hearts of our fighting men," Betty said. "She was telling me about the 'Breastplate of Saint Patrick', but I can't remember the words . . ."

“Oh, I know,” Ellen interrupted. “‘Christ be with me, Christ before me . . . Christ be after me, Christ within me . . . Christ beneath me, Christ above me . . . Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left . . . Christ in the fort, Christ in the chariot . . . Christ in the ship . . .’—there is more, but I forget the rest of it now. Beautiful, isn’t it?”

“Jane said something about these little prayer cards furnishing a kind of breast-plate for this day’s soldiers. Jane has a poetic tendency, you know. The other night we caught her writing poetry of all things. You’d think she’d know a nurse must be practical . . .”

“Careful, Betty. I was too practical once. Remember?”

“Oh, Ellen, I had almost forgotten. You are every bit as good at nursing as before and you have enriched your life and the lives of others by becoming more warm and giving.”

“You know, Betty, there are plenty of people in danger besides our fighting men. All the men and women who have had neither Baptism of Water nor Baptism of Desire are in danger. This is a peacetime, wartime, every-time endeavor. An everybody endeavor, too.”

“Bye, bye, Ellen. We’ll talk later.” Betty hurried away to Ellen’s astonishment. Then Ellen turned, and there was Doctor Mark.

“How are you today, Ellen?”

"Betty asked me that, too, and I told her I was alive, wonderfully alive!"

"Father Andrew tells me that thanks to the wholehearted cooperation of you nurses in this Apostolate of the Prayer Card a lot of other people are wonderfully alive spiritually. I've been talking to Father about you, Ellen . . ."

"Oh no, Father didn't . . . he wouldn't . . ."

"Wouldn't what, Ellen?"

"Oh . . . nothing."

"Wouldn't hint a bit that a fine girl like you would make a good wife for a struggling young intern?"

"He didn't!"

"No, Ellen, that was entirely my own idea. Don't blame Father Andrew for it. But what do *you* think of the idea?"

"I have a date," Ellen said abruptly.

"With whom?" Doctor Mark glowered.

"In the chapel, sir," Ellen said demurely.

"Maybe we could keep this date together, and afterward . . ."

"I think He'll say yes. Oh yes, Doctor Mark, I am very sure He will say yes!"

* * * *

We shall be back with Ellen and Doctor Mark as soon as we take time out for a "spiritual"—not a commercial! May we ask as Betty asked Ellen at the beginning of our story—"How are you?" Alive? Wonderfully alive? If not, then perhaps it is because you have not learned the joy of helping others for His sake. Per-

haps just such a spiritual work as the Apostolate of the Prayer Card is all that is needed to bring out the best in *your* personality, to help you make the most of your life and the lives around you.

It is most desirable that we review a little of the history of the Apostolate for you now. To do that we must look into the great heart of Monsignor Raphael Markham, S.T.D., who from the early days of priesthood felt a bitter frustration when non-Catholics passed from this life to the next without spiritual help.

At one crucial time he sat by the bedside of a very dear non-Catholic friend who was hostile to what he considered to be the Catholic Church. Still, Monsignor Markham knew that this man's intentions were good, and he longed for a few minutes alone with him so he could talk to him about his soul. The fear in the man's eyes haunted him.

A constant stream of the dying man's friends came and went, falsely assuring him he was going to get well. As Monsignor waited, hoping the visitors would leave before him, and give him his chance to help the man spiritually, he thought to himself—oh, if only I had the necessary Acts for salvation printed on an attractive card in the briefest form possible. I could leave such a card with my friend, and it might well do more good than I can achieve by talking with him. The way it looks, I am not going to have a chance to talk with him . . .

He was given no time alone with his friend. The man died before he had a chance to help him. The good priest never forgot. He began at once working on the brief prayers of the prayer card. There were other non-Catholics to be saved. He had seen them in his visits to hospitals, non-Catholic patients with the nameless fear in their eyes, the desperate appeal. He longed to assuage that fear and to give them something to which they could cling.

He framed in his mind prayers that would constitute an Act of Perfect Love of God and of Perfect Contrition. The prayers sincerely said must constitute Baptism of Desire, not merely desire for Baptism. His extensive knowledge of theology stood him in good stead. He accomplished the "ticklish" job of framing the prayers free of theological error and yet acceptable to well-meaning non-Catholics.

However, printing costs were very much against him, and the daily press of routine duties delayed his completion of plans for the printed prayer cards.

In 1926 then, Father Markham became very ill with pneumonia. The doctors held out no hope for him. Prayers for the dying man were being recited. It was a crucial moment again. Father Markham was just conscious enough to remember that dying friend whom he had not been able to help. He could still think well enough to contrast his own

state of "dying", blessed with the Sacraments, and that of the fearful patients without spiritual consolation of any kind, the people he had observed from hospital corridors.

The awful thought came to him—if I die who will complete the work of the prayer cards! Why, I can't die! I have work to do. No doctor could understand what brought the dying man back to life and even health and vigor. Perhaps the Great Doctor will tell him some day that he was brought back to health in order to complete and distribute the prayer cards that, with the grace of God, were to save the souls of so many. Monsignor Markham himself is very silent on these matters. He does not like to talk of himself at all. He does not need to, because his is the kind of work that speaks for itself.

He prepared his little card, which quite accidentally came to the attention of the late Archbishop John T. McNicholas, who was at once filled with enthusiasm for the work. He encouraged the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics, and did all he could to further the spread of the work of the prayer card.

Letters by the thousands telling of happy deaths brought about by the prayer cards testify to the good Archbishop's sound judgment when he gave his approval to the work. It is very appropriate that the Apostolate was placed

under the patronage of Saint Joseph, the patron of a happy death.

The prayer cards are now printed in twenty-two different languages, and are distributed all over the world. Besides the original hand-tinted folders there are now water-proof soldier folders, with or without the U. S. Flag design, hand-tinted large cards suitable for framing and hanging on hospital or office walls, gold-bordered cards, plain cards, folders with extra large print for easy reading, and those done in Braille for the blind.

Anyone may reprint the prayer in any quantity. Its sole purpose is the saving of souls. It is an entirely non-profit work except for the heavenly interest that is undoubtedly accruing to it.

From the many letters received we gain at least some idea of the great work that has been done, and is being done, with dying non-Catholics. We quote from a very few of the many received:

HUNGRY FOR RELIGION

“I just wanted to try the cards out, as it was something new here, and they have gone like wildfire. Many of our non-Catholic patients are hungry for religion.” (This from a good nun in charge of a hospital.)

PRAYER CARD IN USE IN MASONIC HOSPITAL!

“I am an assistant priest in a parish located directly across from a Masonic hospital. In caring for the Catholic patients there, I frequently come across non-Catholics whom I try to assist. I know that your organized apostolate for dying non-Catholics will be able to assist me in my work.”

FAITH GIVEN TO FIGHTING MEN!

“I see in the Prayer Card a grand opportunity and medium for Catholic Action among soldiers, sailors, marines, and air men. In over twenty months of service, I have seen many of my closest friends of the Protestant denominations receive the gift of faith, and enter the Church. I would like to give them something like the prayer card. It may be the means of sanctification for some of my friends who will die, and it may mean that some of my non-Catholic brethren will investigate everything God has taught and revealed, and find their way into the Church.” (From a soldier.)

LOOKING DOWN UPON US!

“I am very grateful for the prayer cards. We are fifty miles from the nearest Catholic Church, and as we have many sick visits among non-Catholics, your

leaflets help very much. A few weeks ago an old man, 92 years—in good faith, but not a Catholic—was given one of your leaflets, and I feel sure he is looking down upon us now.” (From a nun.)

ENTHUSIASTIC ARMY CHAPLAIN

“The soldiers will be richly benefited by this Apostolate. I purpose to form a society to impart instructions in this regard. When this war is over, the Chaplains will realize their greatest support came from such Apostolates as yours.”

THOUSANDS AMONG THE LIVING!”

“Please allow me to congratulate you on your most praiseworthy and meritorious work for the salvation of souls. Thanks to it, many among the dying leave this world reconciled with God, and thousands among the living make acts of faith, hope, and charity daily.” (From a priest.)

IMMORTAL WORK!

“Monsignor Markham’s Prayer Card is certainly going to immortalize his name and perhaps get some additional prayers for him in the real life that begins with death.”

BAPTIST MINISTER USES PRAYER CARDS!

“How the colored people love that prayer. One so-called Baptist minister recites it morning, noon, and night, and stated that it was the most beautiful prayer he had ever seen.”

“SAVED MANY A SOUL!”

“By all means continue to spread these cards and to have people know about them. As Chaptain in a hospital, I have used them extensively, and they have helped me and have saved many a soul.”
(From a priest.)

ENCLOSE WITH CHRISTMAS CARDS!

“Many thanks for your lovely card which you have produced to assist your brother priests in bringing spiritual consolation and Christian help to dying non-Catholics. The card merits our profoundest praise, and I hope it will have a great and wide distribution.

“I am asking you to send me a few more so I may enclose them with my Christmas cards to some of my non-Catholic friends. This is a card which they will keep; this is a prayer which they will recite, and—who knows?—its recitation may bring them into the fold. I think no offense will be given to any of our non-Catholic friends if we enclose such a card with our

personal Christmas greetings. The card is so lovely I feel they will cherish it always!"

IMPRESSION ON THE SOUL

"These cards are indeed beautiful in design, and on that account should appeal to the heart of every non-Catholic who is endowed with any kind of sense of the spiritual and beautiful. Difficult as it seems to reach the minds and hearts of non-Catholics in spiritual things, these cards are so cleverly arranged that the constant perusal of them must make an impression on the soul and lead it away from the captivity of the senses, which are in all of us the real obstacles to the operation of divine and supernatural grace.

"These ought to teach non-Catholics the significance and necessity of real and true repentance, which does not seem to be properly emphasized in their various forms of religion. Their false notion of justification leads many of them into the belief that repentance, in the Catholic sense, is not all necessary, and that salvation may be acquired in other ways. What they need is light and grace presented to them so as to cause them to sincerely contribute something toward the salvation of their souls. These cards, I believe, will contribute much in this direction." (From a priest.)

ALL THE ATTRACTIONS — AND FUNDAMENTALS, TOO!

“The beautiful card has all the attractions—psychological and aesthetic—which you claim for it, and, in addition, it supplies those fundamentals which we have so often wished to have briefly expressed.” (From a nun in charge of a hospital.)

APPROACHING THE NON-CATHOLIC

“In truth I must say this card fills a long-felt want. It is a splendid way of approaching the non-Catholic and winning his confidence.” (From a nun in charge of a hospital.)

CARD HELPS CONVERT WHOLE FAMILY!

“Your Excellency will be pleased to learn that a whole family has come into the Church, the happy result of placing a little card in the hands of a dying woman. It all came about in this manner: I gave some of my cards to a nun, and she in turn gave one to a dying woman. The woman read and admired it, then became interested. She really made the Acts. Sister, of course, prayed earnestly for her. She received all the Sacraments in one day, dying a happy death. The children were baptized, and the father is now receiving instructions. Two of the children are in a parochial school. Either six or

seven people were brought to the true faith. I earnestly hope God will allow me to do a little to promote this lovely missionary work as long as I live." (From a housewife.)

"NOT THE CARD ALONE!"

"The prayer to assist the dying non-Catholic is one whose need has been felt for many years. Thus far, in the few years of my priestly work I tried, as other Fathers do, to do my best in converting the non-Catholic party before its departure from this world. At times results were pleasing, but in the majority of cases great difficulties have been experienced.

"The beautiful prayers and the classical decorations of the card which you mailed me, and for which I wish to express my sincerest thanks, have done more good in one week in dealing with such people than anything else of which I know. Surely, not the card alone, but the prayers of the priest for the one to be converted bring gratifying results." (From a priest.)

A FISHER OF MEN!

"These cards might prove to be good bait, and I am going to cast a few of them in strange waters, or where warning signs say 'no (Catholic) fishing allowed!'" (From a priest with a sense of humor.)

FOR OUR OWN FLOCK!

“I am interested in your splendid work on behalf of dying non-Catholics. These cards should likewise serve for members of our own flock whose faith at times is so watery and weak!” (From a priest.)

TWO HAPPY DEATHS!

“You will be pleased to hear that we had two happy deaths here due to your cards—two men sick with tuberculosis, one a Christian Scientist, the other never baptized. Both were with us only a short time. They were given the cards about two weeks before they died. They read them every day, and were baptized and annointed before they died. Thank God for His goodness and mercy!” (From a nun in charge of a hospital.)

TAKING INSTRUCTIONS!

“I would like to tell you about two cases in the County Hospital. One man very sick made an Act of Contrition, and repeated the prayers on the card. He recovered enough to have an operation which was successful, and is now taking instructions.”

ARCHBISHOP APPROVES!

“I beg of every priest in the Archdiocese to enter enthusiastically into this

Apostolate to Aid the Dying. Thousands of non-Catholics, through our efforts, may acknowledge the supreme Dominion of God and the Divinity of Christ, beg pardon for their sins and implore Divine Mercy. My suggestion is, that every pastor and assistant pastor be as resourceful as their gifts of mind and heart permit them in placing as many cards as possible into the hands of the non-Catholics of their parishes."

(Signed: ✠ JOHN T. McNICHOLES,
Archbishop of Cincinnati)

WINS FAVOR WITH FRANCISCANS!

"It is a very worthy apostolate, and one that fits in splendidly with Tertiary and Franciscan ideals." (Third Order Forum.)

IN THREE DAYS!

"The first definite report concerning the work of a particular card came to my attention this week. A young secular priest whom I had been furnishing the cards visited the City Hospital. He gave a man one of the cards, and in *Three Days* the man asked for a priest and said, 'I want the priest who gave me the prayer card'. Father went. The man made his profession of faith from the card, was baptized, read the prayer over and over as long as he could see, and finally died

with the card on his chest. Father said in relating the incident: 'I am not sentimental, but I sobbed!' Think of the work done in the space of just *Three Days!* This makes a parallel case of the thief on the Cross—with reference to the three hours Christ hung there dying for souls."

HE CLUNG TO PRAYER CARD!

"I can still see an old man, somewhat over fifty years, clutching one of those cards. He came to us some time ago, suffering from a heart and asthmatic trouble, with many complications. He belonged to the very poor, had little education, and would hear nothing of the Catholic religion, much less of Baptism. But, when given a card, he immediately took a liking to those prayers. In every severe heart or asthma attack, no matter how he suffered, he clung with both hands to the card, and he died with one lying close to him." (From a nun.)

FOR SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF NATION

"I am especially interested in one of the secondary effects of your movement—that of getting non-Catholics to pray, especially to make acts necessary by necessity of means for salvation. The number of Americans who never pray must be appalling. If every American

could be gotten to say these prayers, I believe the spiritual welfare of the nation could be secured." (From a priest.)

TRIMMING FOR MIXED MARRIAGES!

"I thought you would be interested in seeing a 'My Daily Prayer' card used by one of our priests in this parish. He uses it as a 'trimming' for a mixed marriage, having both people say it with him as a preliminary to the actual service. It is well received." (From a priest.)

ENTHUSIASTIC HOME MISSIONER

"The reason I am so enthusiastic is that I am the only priest in five counties. The population of this territory is over 125,000. About 100 people make their Easter duty. Thus you can see that I have a lot of missionary work to do. The conversion of these folks seems out of the question at present. If I can get them to say the prayer, I feel that I have done what I can."

FAMILY CONVERSION

"My mother received one of your prayer cards, and she became Catholic a few days before her death. Since then three more in our family have become Catholic."

* * * *

There are so many letters—thousands of them—from Bishops and other Church dignitaries, from workers in foreign countries who use the cards in different languages, but there is not space here to use more than enough for example. We have tried to give a cross-section of ideas on the use of the card rather than use letters that add most to the prestige of the Apostolate. Monsignor Markham has never permitted any vain-glory in connection with his work. His Apostolate is for the glory of God alone.

The prayer cards are real weapons of love for Christian soldiers. The Sacrament of Confirmation made us Christian soldiers. This world is engaged in a spiritual war between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Men and women must fight side by side in the battle to save souls. A woman can carry a prayer card. So can a man. There is dignity of purpose in this great work.

In any "army" food and clothing are most important. Soldiers of Christ should partake of the Blessed Banquet as often as possible. They should be clothed in grace. Then God will multiply their slightest effort for Him.

An army needs inspiration. There is always a feminine ideal. The Christian soldier has the Mother of God for his. She will inspire him with her own burning desire to save souls from hell.

Remember, the Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics is also the Apostolate to Assist the Living. The same prayer card is your ally. The difference is whether the victory is early or late.

It is well to remember that the soldier who fights with a gun to save his country also fights to save "his own skin." With the spiritual soldier it is the same. He fights to save the displaced persons (those outside the fold), but in doing so he also fights to save his own soul. A multitude of sins are covered by causing one sinner to repent of his wrong-doing, in Jesus' Holy Name. We, the multitude of sinners, can hardly pass up this opportunity to join in an Apostolate that is the means of repentance for many sinners. But above everything else, let us do the work of the Apostolate for the greater glory of God, our all-kind, all-good, and all-merciful Father.

Needed: An army of men and women fortified with strong faith in the mercy of God, and armed with prayer cards designed to save displaced persons from eternal disaster! Order all "army" equipment from the brief, but complete catalogue in the back of this booklet.

If you are really alive spiritually, you will want to do all in your power to help your non-Catholic neighbor "come alive", too. The next time someone asks "how are you?"—stop and think. How are you spiritually? And the next time you ask

another, "how are you?"—stop and think. How is he spiritually? If you make a practice of the "how are you?" greeting, addressed to acquaintances and strangers alike, and always add mentally the word "spiritually", you will soon be busy handing out prayer cards and giving new life to old living.

* * * *

What you want to know, of course, (now that our "spiritual" is finished), is *how are* Ellen Patley and Doctor Mark? We did leave them sort of hanging in mid-air, didn't we? Up in the clouds, anyway!

Well, when Ellen first said "yes" to Doctor Mark's proposal of marriage, he was so elated he could not think beyond Ellen and himself. He even resented it once or twice when Ellen was late in keeping an appointment with him because of some work she was doing for the Apostolate.

Ellen, ever on the alert for new fields for the Apostolate, took a firm grip on her fiance's arms and faced him squarely after he had protested her tardiness. "Doctors!" she exclaimed. "Why haven't I thought of it before? I am going to order 100 cards each for you and Doctor Bryson and Doctor Clevinger and Doctor . . ."

Doctor Mark interrupted with a comment about his already crowded schedule,

but "you'll find time!" Ellen said confidently.

"Even if other things have to take second place?" Doctor Mark asked shrewdly. Ellen nodded gravely. "Even if *you* have to take second place?" he persisted.

"That's the way it has to be, darling! God first, earthly loves second. Besides, if it had not been for this wonderful Apostolate you and I might still be passing each other in the corridor with a sterile 'good morning, Nurse Patley' . . ."

"Instead of a nasty old germ-laden good-night kiss when I deposit you on the doorstep of the nurses' home of evenings," Doctor Mark teased. "You win, Ellen. From now on the Apostolate has a doctor on the case—or should I say cases? And how are you *now*, Nurse Patley?" he asked tenderly.

"I just pinched myself, doctor, and I find I'm wonderfully, gloriously alive at last!"

Further information about the *Apostolate to Assist Dying Non-Catholics* and copies of the prayer card may be obtained from:

- A. Rt. Rev. R. J. Markham, S.T.D., Compton Road, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio
- B. Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis, St. Clare Convent, Hartwell, Cincinnati 15, Ohio
- C. Sister Mary Carmelita, R.S.M., Convent of Mercy, 1409 Freeman Avenue, Cincinnati 14, Ohio

Prayer cards are available in English (different styles and Braille), Bohemian, Chinese, Croatian, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, and Ukrainian.

