Along This Lenten Highway

Sorin Sub: About this Lenten dispensation again -- just what does it mean?

Reply: It means that you go along in food matters, during Lent, just as you always do, so long as you eat on campus. There are no restrictions whatsoever. The Off-Campus students have it even better -- they enjoy elsewhere what you enjoy on campus. For you the dispensation is local; for Off-Campus men, it is personal.

Sorin Sub: Suppose I want to eat in South Bend?

Reply: When you leave the campus, you leave the dispensation here, too. But the general Church law permits you to eat meat once a day. And so, you are permitted to eat meat once a day off-campus -- at the meal you eat off-campus. Hence, too, all faculty members, employees, etc., may eat meat once a day off-campus (for example, at the evening meal with their families -- even though they have already eaten meat earlier on campus).

Sorin Sub: But if you are exempted by local dispensation for part of the day, you are dispensed for the whole day everywhere. A priest said so.

Reply: Archbishop Noll, who wants us to confine our eating of meat to the principal meal taken off-campus, explains his mind on the local regulation:

"In the past, I have had a great many complaints about members of the faculty, and of the student body, taking it upon themselves to apply the dispensation even if they eat off-campus. They actually gave scandal..."

Thus, the theological opinion, which of itself is sound, must here give way to the Bishop's prudent insistence that we avoid giving scandal in South Bend and elsewhere, as we most certainly do when we wolf down hamburgers at all hours before villagers.

Adult Catholics in South Bend and elsewhere are commanded to abstain from meat except at the principal meal during Lent. The Bishop wants adult students and faculty to do the same when they eat in town, and so edify the villagers.

Please Note: a) Eating between meals pertains to the fast -- which binds all over 21, b) Eating meat pertains to abstinence -- which binds all over 7.

Sorin Sub: What if I go elsewhere for a weekend?

Reply: You come under the laws of that diocese, whatever they are. It's great to tell the girl's family you have a dispensation at Notre Dame, but it doesn't entitle you to bacon for breakfast, roast beef at noon, and a steak in the evening -- except on Sunday when no Lenten laws are in effect. Even her family will be grateful.

"Shut the Door, They're Coming Thru The Windows"...

That's an old Irish song to describe crowds -- huge, unexpected crowds -- such as we have at the afternoon Mass in Dillon on Tuesday and Thursday. At 5 p.m. we hung out the signs; at 5:10 it was worse than Macy's Basement -- all of which prompts the Bulletin to note: a) There's ample room for everyone in Sacred Heart Church; b) those living on campus would exercise a gracious gesture by leaving the afternoon Mass and evening facilities on Tuesday and Thursday in Dillon to those who cannot attend Mass at any other time during the day.