



Tom Riordan
Executive Editor

The day Mr. Kelley missed altar boy practice

Lent started this week.

Ash Wednesday, which opens the annual Christian season of penance, always reminds me of Visitation School. And Visitation reminds me of Frank Kelley.

As most folks know, Kelley is Michigan's long-time attorney general. What many don't know is that Frank is a Visitation graduate.

There's an untold story about Kelley (actually, I did tell it once at a banquet when introducing him, but that was in Traverse City) which I'll go into print with here.

But first let me share my early memories of Lent as a grade schooler at Visitation, which was at 12th Street and Webb Avenue in Detroit. Things like the Mighty Mite Box and Grennan's Bakery hot cross buns.

The Mite Box was actually a small tin can with a slot for coins in the top and wrapped with a purple label. It featured a beautiful drawing of Jesus as he mourned mankind in the Garden of Olives. Each child was given a Mite Box on Ash Wednesday. Into it would go our pennies and nickels, saved when we gave up candy and gum during Lent.

We'd turn them in during Holy Week and the money went to the missions.

GRENNAN'S HOT CROSS BUNS arrived at our school early each week during Lent in a giant truck. Hundreds of dozens would be moved into the shade.

owy Vissy gymnasium and we would all file by to pick up armfuls.

Each student was expected to sell four or five dozen each week. Hot cross buns were a tradition on the Lenten menu in most Catholic homes. For the life of me I can't recall how well I sold them, but I'm certain our home ended up with more hot cross buns than most.

So much for my childhood recollections of Lent. Let's push on to the tale about our attorney general.

As a senior at Visitation High school (which now houses St. Martin de Porres High School), Frank Kelley was brilliant and inventive, qualities he still displays as a politician.

One of the regular nuns, who had Kelley in her class, became seriously ill and was hospitalized. The Dominican Order in Adrian was called, and a retired nun was dispatched to substitute. She is the one to report the story.

ON THE INITIAL FRIDAY that the sub was on duty, the bell rang for the day's final class. With that, Kelley got up and started to walk out.

"Where are you going, Mr. Kelley?" the nun asked.

"Dominus vobiscum (the Lord be with you), Sister, altar boy practice."

Now it was true that during the final period on Friday, all high school students who were regular

altar boys had one hour of practice in the church. In those days the Mass was said entirely in Latin and servers played key roles in responding to the priest's prayers.

Two weeks went by. Each Friday, Kelley moved out when the bell rang.

Then on the following Sunday afternoon, as the nuns gathered for dinner, the conversation centered on outstanding students.

The retired sister spoke up. "I'm greatly impressed by young Frank Kelley. He is such a fine student and he never misses altar boy practice."

There was a hush around the table.

Finally one of the younger nuns spoke up. "Sister, I'm afraid you're being taken. Frank Kelley isn't an altar boy. He just has been taking off an hour early on Fridays."

The old nun sat quietly, never showing an ounce of emotion, as Dominican sisters used to do in the good old days. And the conversation drifted into other areas.

COME THE NEXT FRIDAY the bell sounded and Kelley gathered up his books and started to exit.

"Mr. Kelley, where are you going?"

"Dominus vobiscum, Sister, altar boy practice."

"Et cum Spiritu tuo (and with your spirit), Frank; sit down, the jig is up."

Young Mr. Kelley sheepishly slumped back into his seat.

That was a lot of years ago. And the story stayed with the old nun, until the mid-1960s when she related the incident to a select few, including one lay person, at the Adrian Mother House.

By coincidence, I met Frank Kelley a few months later and told him that I had heard a magnificent story about him.

"What is it?" he asked.

"You'll have to be patient. When you hear it, I want a lot of others to hear it at the same time."

SOME SEVEN YEARS rolled by when fate set the stage. There was a Michigan Newspaper Association meeting in Traverse City's Park Place Hotel. Kelley was scheduled to be the main speaker.

"Who is going to introduce Frank Kelley?" I asked MPA's major domo Warren Hoyt.

"Do you want to?"

"Put me down," I grinned.

And so it came to pass. I labored long and hard to



Attorney General Frank Kelley was surprised, then shocked, because he didn't get the usual floral introduction about his being the champion of the consumer. (Staff photo)

frame just the right words, the correct pauses, the knowing facial grimaces.

It was all worth the effort.

Mr. Kelley, who long forgot that casual comment of mine when we met, was assuming the usual flowery introduction, with educational ports of call, political accomplishments, the crusader of the consumer stuff.

Instead he got that long-ago incident from Visitation.

His reactions were beautiful. First there was surprise, then shock, then a violent shaking of his head—yes, it really happened.

So much for the attorney general. Now I've got to locate a Mighty Mite Box. It's Lent, you know.

LIT beckons

Calling young Einsteins

Future Einsteins and just plain science buffs will find much of interest during a Summer Science Institute at Lawrence Institute of Technology, 21000 W. 10 Mile, Southfield.

This will be the 11th year for the popular six-week program, opening the world of advanced science study to exceptional high school students. Admission is open to current high school juniors who have received no grades lower than B in high school science or mathematics.

The program will run from June 18 to July 27, according to Zaven Margosian, dean of LIT's School of Arts and

Science and director of the institute.

"The program is limited to 60 outstanding science students who have demonstrated superior achievement and who have been recommended by their science teacher and counselor or principal," said Margosian. "These 60 participants will be chosen from the top applicants who meet our criteria."

Deadline for applications is March 28. Admitted applicants will be notified by April 25. Application forms are available from Dean Margosian's office at 356-0200, ext. 61 or 104.

Courses in the program will cover such topics as chemical kinetics, X-ray

diffraction analysis, radiochemical nuclear physics, graphical analysis and an overview of calculus. Among daily activities will be studies of chemical analysis and use of the college's digital computer.

LIT arranges field trips to research laboratories and invites top corporate executives, researchers and engineers to speak to students.

"By exposing students to the real world of science, we hope they will come to understand the career possibilities and gain a better understanding of the subjects themselves," Margosian said.

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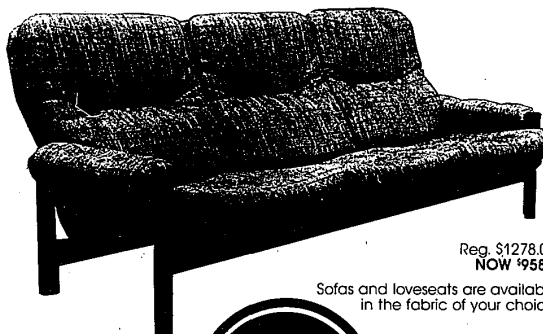
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