

"Save the day from gloom"

CAMBERWELL POLL ON SUNDAY SPORT

The Camberwell City Council has decided to hold a referendum concerning the use of its reserves for sporting activities on Sundays. Voting is by post and not obligatory.

This matter is a contentious question and strong views are held on both sides. It is fair to say, at the outset, that no one holds Sunday as sacred as the Catholic.

It is in a very special sense God's day, and we all realise our obligation of His commandment, which commands us to keep holy His Sabbath.

In order to emphasise its importance, the Catholic Church in her own precepts gives it pride of place — number one priority — to hear Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

Often this is done at great personal inconvenience, distance, weather, health, work or business. No Catholic worthy of the name misses Mass. We give God first place. It is His Day and undoubtedly He wants us to be happy and contented.

To turn His Day into a day of gloom and pharisaical piety constitutes a poor idea of God — of His Love, His Kindness, His Mercy.

Yet there are some, and they are active over this referendum, who, thanks to their puritanical background, think upon these lines.

They do not rise early on Sundays — often breakfast and lunch become one meal after a morning's sloth and idleness, and then, as the day draws to a close, they may or may not attend Divine service at their ease.

It is a misconception of Bible reading to interpret the Sabbath day of rest as a day of idleness.

It is a day of rest from the type of work we do throughout the week, a rest from servile work in order to more effectively worship God and honor Him in all our activities of the day.

The wowsers make it a day of gloom and sloth; we make it a

day of worship and joy in action.

Having reverently acknowledged it as God's day, having given Him the first-fruits of the day in worship and adoration, Catholics feel free to spend later hours of it in innocent recreation and relaxation.

Provided such activities are not sinful in themselves, they cannot offend God or become sinful because they are enjoyed on a Sunday.

Noise a red herring

If motoring, golfing, swimming, hiking are approved, why frown on activities more suited to younger people — tennis, cricket, football? Noise is only a red herring. In themselves they are not noisy games, and in reality do not attract crowds large enough to be embarrassing.

"Organised" is also another bugbear in the minds of the die-hards. What game is worth its salt if it is not organised — even cards and ludo require an opponent.

Today is the age of youth. We can have healthy youth, or the reverse — the bodgie and the widgie. Here is a recent survey of mischievous idleness:

BOX HILL. — Between 30 and 40 youths wandering aimlessly near the station. Smaller groups standing idly about.

ESSENDON. — More than 25 groups, ranging from four to 10 in number, mainly loitering around milk bars and shopping centres.

COBURG. — More than 100 youths in vicinity of Coburg Lake and Sydney-rd. milk bars. Brawls

This statement has been issued by the Melbourne Diocesan executive of the Y.C.W.

not uncommon. A youth lost an eye in an incident recently.

MULGRAVE. — Mobs are already a reality and violence has been used.

SANDRINGHAM. — In newer areas police have to move on mobs.

This list is by no means exhaustive and presents only a small sample of the actual facts.

Let's face it. We adults, in the main, have our Sunday recreation. We garden or golf or motor or read. But what we do is of our own choice. What right have we to sit in judgment on the types of recreation our youth should enjoy?

Let lads have their innocent game. Let them enjoy themselves where they can so easily be controlled, if indeed they need it.

People with the outlook of 1880 should no longer be allowed to tie down the community's safety valves.

Other organisations have been very busy organising a "No" vote. In Camberwell we have never had a chance to show our own strength.

We could change the whole outlook if we are sufficiently enthusiastic. Voting is not compulsory as far as the council is concerned, but every one of us should treat it as a "must."

If every Catholic votes "Yes" and makes certain of forwarding the ballot paper in time—posted no later than Sunday, May 31 — we may save the day—from gloom.