

What do religious leaders think of A.A.?

Also see pamphlet: "Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A." Probably no lay movement of modern times has been more richly endowed than A.A. with the support of the clergy of all the great faiths. Like the doctors, mankind's spiritual advisers have long been troubled by the problem of alcoholism. Many of these advisers have heard honest people make sincere pledges to abstain from alcohol they could not control — only to see them break those pledges within hours, days, or weeks. Sympathy, understanding, and appeals to conscience have been of little avail to the clergy in their attempts to help the alcoholic. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that A.A. — although it offers a way of life rather than a way of formal religion — should be embraced so warmly by representatives of many different denominations. Here is how some of them have referred to A.A. in the past: The Directors Bulletin, a Jesuit periodical published at St. Louis, Mo. "Father Dowling of The Queen's Work staff had exceptional opportunity to observe the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. "He found that the keystone of the A.A. therapy includes self-denial, humility, charity, good example, and opportunities for a new pattern of social recreation. All denominations are represented in the movement. Readers can be assured that no article or book on the movement is one-tenth as convincing as is personal contact with an individual or group of A.A.s whose personalities and homes and businesses have been transformed from chaos into sound achievement." The Living Church (Episcopal) "Basis of the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous is the truly Christian principle that a man cannot help himself except by helping others. The A.A. plan is described by the members themselves as 'self-insurance.' This self-insurance has resulted in the restoration of physical, mental, and spiritual health and self-respect to hundreds of men and women who would be hopelessly down-and-out without its unique but effective therapy."