

# My Faults, Sins, Failures

## The Toilet Paper Adventure

While we lived in town on Wadsworth Street we had only one bathroom and that without a window or fan. Mom and dad would often light a match to dispel the odors in the room. That was our cheap air freshener. One day I was sitting on the toilet and saw the matches sitting on the back of the toilet. I decided to play with them, lighting and dousing one after another. Soon that got a bit boring. I wondered if toilet paper would burn slowly or rapidly. I got my answer in a blaze of flame. It burns quickly! The whole roll seemed to catch fire. I quickly doused it with my hand but it left burn marks on the wall. I tried everything to clean those marks. I tried soap, Ajax and bleach. Nothing would remove those stains. Being clever, I decided to unroll a few sheets of toilet paper and left it dangling enough to cover the marks.

Within the hour mom called everyone to line up in the kitchen. We were in trouble. Someone had played with matches in the bathroom. She found the marks on the wall (God told her). Now she wanted the guilty party to step forward and confess or all of us would get a spanking. There we stood, six little innocents all standing in a row. I was under great conviction and was about to step forward as I secretly prayed, "Lord, deliver us now and in the time of our death," when suddenly my sister, Norma Jean, burst into tears and confessed that she had played with the matches and left the burn marks on the wall. She got the spanking and I got off scot free. But I learned a lesson – *"Be sure your sin will find you out."*

That "sin" of hiding my guilt dogged me for many years until as an adult my siblings were remembering events of our childhood and the toilet paper episode came up. I finally admitted to my sister that she took my punishment and that I too had played with matches in the bathroom.