

# Joking

by Steven J. Kolbe

I don't care much for Joking, which is not to say that I don't care at all for Joking, just that I don't care much. I would say, if I had to say, that I care for Joking about as much as I care for a cousin, not a close cousin, one I have a genuine friendship with, but rather one for whom I feel the perfunctory kind of love that one must feel for family, no matter how trivial the connection is. I don't ask my uncles or aunts about him, but when they mention his new job or new wife, I nod politely as if I care a great deal for Joking and all of his affairs.

If a bus were charging recklessly towards him while he bent over to tie a shoelace, I would *not* push him out of the way, would not sacrifice myself like that, but when, at his funeral I said, "Why, oh why, didn't I push him out of the way?" I would be propounding it honestly, because I really do wish that I cared more, that I cared more Joking.

Mostly, he just makes me feel inadequate, like I have a heart of stone. So I hope you understand my ambivalence towards Joking, and why I cannot laugh at your awful pun.

