

# Restaurant staff 'were standing in excrement'

AN INDIAN restaurant had human waste overflowing from a blocked sewer into where staff were preparing food, a shock report has revealed.

Staff standing outside using peelers and other food equipment 'would be standing in the excrement' - then carrying it inside on their shoes, the Food Safety Authority report found.

The waste was coming from an overflowing manhole cover. The Saffron restaurant and takeaway in Creeslough, Co. Donegal, was closed for a week until the drain was fixed but has since opened again.

A staff member said: 'The closure was two weeks ago when our drain system didn't work.

By **Christian McCashin**

They came and they looked and they said, "When you finish the work, you can open" - and we opened last week.'

The FSAI report said: 'Human excrement was overflowing and ponding in an area beside the shed in which the potato peeler was located due to an overflowing manhole.'

'As staff had to stand outside while using this food equipment, they would be standing in the excrement, thereby carrying it into the food premises on their shoes.'

The report also found dead flies were floating in oil used to make pizzas. It stated: 'Foods

cooked on the premises were not being given proper use-by dates and as a result, cooked chicken and minced beef were stored to use for more than five days after cooking.'

'There was a risk of contamination of foods as evidenced by cooked chicken being stored in a container which also contained raw chicken juice.'

The report also found food utensils such as cutlery and plates were not washed 'adequately or disinfected, as evidenced by food debris and dirt found on all equipment'.

The restaurant says that it specialises in Indian cuisine, but also serves a variety of European dishes.

# Dr Mark Dooley



## MORAL MATTERS

# Without good manners, our morality dies

**W**HERE have all the manners gone? It is nearly a decade since I last wrote about their decline, but I never imagined it could get this bad. Do we fear that small gestures of kindness will somehow compromise our self-sufficiency?

A small boy steps from Mrs Dooley's car. He has spent the day playing in our home. 'I hope you enjoyed yourself,' she says. 'Whatever,' he replies.

'Whatever.' With this one word, the child displays contempt for his friend, his hosts and for the world. But he is only a child and who can blame this little one for the sins of his society?

Children learn by example, by what they see and hear and absorb from the ether. They are not naturally rude, but they can be corrupted. Their innocence is merely on loan.

'Whatever', and then he turned his back and skipped indoors. What can you do?

We know his parents would be mortified, shattered by their son's insolence.

Our little boy could only ask: 'Why didn't he say, "Thank you"?'

A hard lesson in life from a little friend. 'Manners make the man,' they say, but they crown a child.

Manners are not some form of optional window-dressing. They provide the glue which binds society together. Without manners, we have only suspicion, distrust and disgust.

And what does it cost to say 'please' or 'thank you'? What burden does it impose to smile and make way? Simple decency demands that we teach our children to be polite.

We can have all the wealth in the world, but without manners we won't have that vital ingredient which makes us likeable. For manners guard against rudeness and safeguard against selfishness.

Manners reveal the beauty of a person, their gentleness and light. There is a smile where there could be a scowl. There is goodwill in place of spite.

Bad manners leave a bad taste. You don't easily forget them because they cannot but offend. They poison our perception.

You say 'hello' to a child and they stare at you blankly. Already, the conversation has no hope. What is there to say to someone who doesn't answer back? But we are

to blame, aren't we. As I say, children don't pick it off the ground. They emulate what they see and hear, what appears to them as the norm.

Is it the new norm to be bad-mannered? Are we are so lost that we can't manage to be polite? Are we now so comfortable with coarseness that we consider it the way of the future?

'Whatever'. It is such a small word and yet so loaded with scorn. One little word with a massive impact.

Little words always leave their mark. A small 'thank you' is the root of respect. The person at the checkout is paid for their time, so why say, 'Thank you'? We say it because we want them to know they are valued as people.

Yes, we could live without manners just like we could live without art. But what type of world would this be without the beauty that art conveys? Likewise, what type of society would this be without that beauty which flows from the heart-felt harmony produced by manners?

One word and we become a source of light. A smile, a 'thank you' and we see that people instantly change. They smile back even when they seem least inclined.

**A**BOND is formed among strangers. Barriers are broken down and social division surpassed. Manners have put us at peace with one another.

What sort of society will we have when people no longer see the need for that peace? Where will we be when people take but cannot find it in their heart to say, 'Thank you'? Like a world without art, it will be one devoid of beauty, gentleness and empathy.

We acknowledge one another in such simple ways. A mannerly gesture here, a kind word there and people feel valued and appreciated. Small words, big consequences.

It is true: all morality is contained in our manners. That is why, if children have manners, they don't need lessons in virtue or ethics. They will intuitively know the difference between right and wrong.

They will grow up to be cherished, admired and respected. They will naturally put others before themselves and, even in defeat, they will glow with courtesy.

Of course, we could always settle for the alternative: a world where even children answer kindness with a sarcastic sneer.

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