

Zmon's First Soaping

(Or was it?)

I would be interested in other's first memories of mouth washing.

For me they revolve around the Catholic grade school that I attended. In those days all of the teachers were nuns. I was a pupil in Sister Mary Claude's class. She had a sink in the back of the classroom that she put to good use.

You didn't have to be caught swearing in that class. All that you had to do was to be caught talking, and she would walk you back to the sink and wash your mouth out. As you can probably imagine, she had a very quiet and orderly class.

I went to a Catholic school too. In second grade, we had a coat room with a sink in it, one of the few rooms in the school which had one. One day in the middle of class, the nun pointed to one boy and said, "Go in the coatroom and wash your mouth out with soap!" He came back a couple of minutes later, looking plenty embarrassed. I always wondered how long he washed his mouth? I've heard of parents telling kids to do that, and I wonder what they expect the kids to do.

Other teachers occasionally brought kids into our room to use the sink. Our class would get real quiet so we could try to hear what was going on. Later, word would get around the playground that so and so that their mouth washed out.

A year or two later, one boy was pulled out of our class. About a half an hour later he was brought back by two of the nuns. He was told to take his seat, and it was easy to see that he had an odd look on his face. My girlfriend leaned over to me and whispered, "I think that they washed his mouth out with soap."

Jeez, I wonder what they did for half an hour? That would be quite a story.

Those are my early memories. What are yours?

I got my mouth washed out with soap a couple of times when I was young. Don't remember why, but it obviously had an impact, although not what my mother intended.

But my earliest strong memory involving soap was the first time I washed another kid's mouth out. He was a friend my age (about 6).

Don't know what started it (I think we had been fighting, I bit him and got my mouth washed out when my mother heard about it) but I got the idea to wash his mouth out with soap. He was just about my size, but I managed to force him into his bathroom and stick a bar of soap in his mouth and wash it pretty well.

I remember enjoying that. I washed his mouth out another time, and from that point on I was hooked.

"Z"