

Religious Bulletin
October 3, 1927

Feast of the Little Flower.

Today is the feast of St. Therese of Liseaux, "The Little Flower of Jesus," the young Carmelite nun who has taken the world by storm. We have just finished a Novena to her for protection this year: keep up your prayers, as there is much sickness about, and the abnormal weather conditions point to a dangerous year.

Perhaps You Haven't the Right Point of View.

If you didn't make the Mission you are out of step with the religious life at Notre Dame, and if so you are missing the whole point of an institution like this. You need to look into yourself. You should not feel comfortable if you are out of place, and you are certainly out of place if you are not ambitious to be something more than a mediocre Catholic at least while you are a student here.

Perhaps you haven't the right point of view. There are always people of undeveloped minds who enjoy the attention they get by being queer. They adopt a pose, they find that it draws the ire of well-meaning critics or the solicitous attention of real friends; and they carry the attitude to ridiculous extremes to remain in the glare of the spotlight. It is a subnormality; it is the psychological twist that accounts for the so-called "tin-horn atheists". These fellows are poorly trained at home (humility is left out of their parental training); they make their first stand in the hope of shocking someone; they read infidel authors to find a few arguments to keep them on their feet; they refuse to read Catholic authors; and they are in a sorry mental, moral, and spiritual condition until some wallop comes along to bring them to their knees before God.

Take the victim of sloth. He is seldom without a peculiar kind of vanity: at the very least he feels that the world owes him a living. In his sluggish brain there germinates the idea that he must be of vast importance to God, or God and His Church would not make so much fuss over him. He also enjoys the notoriety, and he goes so far as to snub God.

Or take the victim of drink or impurity. He also senses his importance to God's plan for the universe, or he would not dare presume to go on in sin when he knows that in the Sacraments he can find not only forgiveness but strength to overcome his weaknesses. If Christ has suffered so much for him, He must love him mightily, and he will grant him full pardon when his rotten carcass is no longer capable of sin.

If for no other reason than that you love comfort, get these things straight. The sin here described is about the most dangerous sin you can commit -- the sin of tempting God, or presumption of God's mercy. The silly charge is sometimes made that Notre Dame is simply trying to make a big statistical showing in daily Communions. If that were so the Bulletin would devote its attention to the believers in daily Communion who miss through laziness or inadvertence three or four times a week; as a matter of fact, about 80% of the Bulletin space is devoted to the 16% of the students who receive less often than once a week -- and a good part of that 80% to the small number who never receive.

The Catholic Church will always pursue sinners, because sinners are the pursuit of the Hound of Heaven. But she knows that in the past God has forsaken sinners, as he did with the people of Israel when He sent Elias away from the Jews into Phoenicia, when He sent Jonas away from Israel into Nineveh, as He did when Christ left His enemies to their own devices after His last prayer for them on the Cross. She pursues them, even though she knows that only some will be converted and that many will go to Hell.