
"A City Seated Upon a Mountain Cannot Be Hid."

To our visitors: You have been attracted here today by a football game. We hope that you will enjoy it, and feel that you will. Honest recreation is good for the soul, and there is in football something exhilarating, something very expressive of young American manhood. It gives us the feeling that things are well with our land when its future is in the hands of such clean-cut, resourceful, aggressive young men as football develops.

But we hope that you will see more than a football game today; we would regret having you leave our midst without learning something about what is behind "Notre Dame football." That something is prayer. We say it openly, and not in any boasting spirit; indeed, it is humility rather than vanity to acknowledge our complete dependence upon God and our faith in His Providence.

At the student ovation given the football team last Sunday night, on the steps of the Court House in South Bend, Captain Miller, addressing the students and townspeople there assembled, said: "Prayer won that game. You students who offered more than two thousand Holy Communions for us yesterday morning, and all of you, students and townspeople, who prayed for us during the game, won it for us. And if you want to continue to help us to give the best that is in us, to do in the game the things we are taught to do, keep on praying for us. Be down in those little hall chapels at school tomorrow morning, to offer Holy Communion for us; you people of South Bend, pray in your churches and in your homes for us. That is what we appreciate; that is what helps us."

It has been the fond hope of those who direct the destinies of this university, to make of it a citadel of prayer. Behaviorists and other materialistic philosophers write paragraphs of profound nonsense on the "psychological value of prayer," and would reduce it to the category of self-delusion and auto-suggestion. And in a world that is fast losing all knowledge of God as He has revealed Himself to us, this view, which is the dry-rot of religion, is gaining wide acceptance.

Here at Notre Dame we accept prayer as part of our daily existence. It seems as natural for a young Notre Dame man to pray as to watch a football game. We accept in simple faith, and try to practice just as simply, the full teaching of the Son of God on prayer, as it is handed down to us by the Holy Catholic Church which He established as His representative on earth. In our prayer we praise God, and thank Him for His benefits, and ask Him to pardon our offenses and meet all our daily needs, as He taught us to pray in the "Our Father." He told us not only that we might, but should, pray for the relief of our needs, temporal and physical, as well as spiritual.

At the game today you will see an example of the power of prayer. Van Wallace will be there on his wheel-chair. Four years ago on the Fourth of July, he broke his neck while making a shallow dive. The doctors gave him no chance to live. A Novena was offered for him by the Summer School students here, and on the ninth day of it he was at the point of death. Then he fell into a deep, natural sleep that lasted eight hours, and the signs of death disappeared. Countless prayers have been offered for him since that time; and after a year and a half of them the doctors admitted he could live. Inch by inch he has gained strength and life in his paralyzed members, and today he is making his first visit back to his old school. If you don't believe in prayer, get close enough to him to see his cheerful smile. It will recall what you learned at your mother's knee before the world cheated you.

Tomorrow we will begin another Novena for the complete recovery of Van Wallace, if such be God's Holy Will. During the next nine days the students are requested to give Van a remembrance in Holy Communion and say the Litany of the Blessed Virgin for him every day. His courage inspires us to continue; we will never desert him.