

May 7, 1929

Your Church Was Built By Women.

It has often been said that St. Patrick's Cathedral, in New York City, was built by the offerings of Irish servant girls. And there is a great deal of truth in the statement. Until comparatively recent times, very large donations to Catholic causes were exceedingly rare; now they are commoner, but still much less frequent than non-Catholic gifts to religious and social causes. The enormous physical plant of the Catholic Church in the United States and its tremendous spiritual accomplishments are largely the fruit of the sacrifices of middle-class people.

While you may have heard that statement about St. Patrick's Cathedral, it is less likely that you have heard that the same is true of your own Church of the Sacred Heart, here at Notre Dame. But the statement is true. Father Granger, who was Prefect of Religion here for forty-six years (dying in 1893) built the church with donations he solicited from the Children of Mary throughout the United States. There were other donors, of course, but the money came largely from unmarried women, most of them working girls. Perhaps it was in tribute to them that the windows of the nave (made by the Carmelite nuns of LeMans, France) picture twenty-four women Saints and only sixteen holy men.

The church of these servant girls has served its purpose well. It has for generations been the regular place of worship of the students, the community, and the parish; the priests of the diocese of Fort Wayne have used it regularly for their annual retreats, as did the priests of the archdiocese of Chicago until a few years ago; it witnessed the organization of the Priests' Eucharistic League in the United States and has been the scene of many other important religious gatherings; all the Papal Delegates to the United States have worshipped in it, so have many Cardinals; it has reverberated to the eloquence of most of the great Catholic preachers of America during the past half century; it has been a shrine of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament from which have radiated graces that have circled the globe.

Last week's Scholastic called your attention to the present condition of the church, a condition which demands a remedy. God can be worshipped equally in a thatch-covered hut in India and in the Cathedral of Chartres, but it is not fitting that His sanctuary at His Mother's school, whence He has dispensed so many graces, should fall into decay if we can prevent it.

Shall we call on servant girls, bookkeepers, and stenographers to restore the church they built, or do the Notre Dame men of the present want to have a hand in its restoration and embellishment? Notre Dame men in the past have done little for their church; little has been asked of them. But creaking boards and flaking plaster make their demands on the present generation. Can we finish the work so beautifully begun by the savings of self-sacrificing women?

A Novena For Conversions.

The Novena for Pentecost, which begins next Friday, is a Novena for conversions, similar to the Church Unity Octave. You will find at the pamphlet rack a box in which you may place names (in sealed envelopes) of persons for whom you wish the grace of Faith. The names will be left on the altar during the nine days, -- Nine conversions have been reported since the Church Unity Octave in January, -- A prayer to the Holy Ghost for the intentions of the Novena will be recited daily at 5:15 benediction.

Not A Fast Day.

Tomorrow, the Vigil of the Feast of the Ascension, is not a day of fast and abstinence.

Prayers.

James Dell's uncle, deceased; a deceased friend of Tom Cunningham (who is still convalescent from his appendicitis attack; four special intentions. Jos. Guadalupe's brother died Sunday night.