

Gaps in Adoration
Today: 2:00, 2:30

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
May 18, 1931

A Shrine of St. Olaf At Notre Dame.

Back in the Eleventh Century, when the island of England was the common battle-ground of Norman and Dane, a stout-hearted King of Norway brought help to King Ethelred against a Danish invasion. Victorious in arms, he rested for a time with his royal host, and from him and his court he learned the story of Jesus of Nazareth, the King Who was crucified to bring peace to the world. He believed and was baptized, this Olave Tooley, King of Norway; and when he embarked again for his native land, it was with a retinue of priests and monks who were to evangelize his country.

Today this King is venerated as St. Olaf, Martyr, Patron of Norway. The work of evangelizing the people had God's blessing, and he had the consolation of seeing the greater part of his subjects bow their necks to receive the yoke of Christ. The pagan remnant rebelled against him, however, and drove him into exile; and the noble King finally gave up his life to them in battle near Drontheim, in the sixteenth year of his reign. The ninth centenary of St. Olaf's martyrdom was celebrated last year.

Notre Dame should not be unmindful of her European backgrounds. Most of the nations of Europe have contributed to her upbuilding. The school was mothered by the eldest daughter of the Church and then kidnapped by the Niobe of nations. France sent men and money and treasures of sacred art; Ireland had only men to send, but she sent them in abundance, and her sons were the most numerous of any of Father Sorin's early neophytes. Germany sent scholars, so also did Belgium and little Luxembourg; Italy sent treasures of art and piety; Poland sent zealous pastors. Austria, Switzerland, England, Hungary, gave of the best of their background to fill out the cosmopolitan picture that is Notre Dame today.

And then Norway, Lutheran of the Lutherans, sent of its best to Notre Dame, a little, two-headed immigrant boy, destined to become the best known and best beloved of any of his race in America. Knute Rockne learned at the feet of Notre Dame the secrets of Catholic education, and he broadcast them to the world. As Bishop Kelley intimated in his admirable editorial, "Rock," Knute Rockne was smart enough to understand the meaning of the statue that guards the entrance to these grounds and courageous enough to put that lesson into practice before the whole world.

What more fitting acknowledgement could there be, then, of Notre Dame's debt to Norway, than a shrine to Saint Olaf in the chapel where more students will worship than in any other sanctuary on these hallowed grounds? Knute Rockne himself, who was designated by the King of Norway for the Knighthood of St. Olaf, would have wished for no more appropriate memorial to himself; for Knute was proud of the land that gave him birth, appreciative of the sturdy qualities with which she endows her sons, and loyal to her traditions.

The University is grateful to Mrs. Rockne for the suggestion of a memorial to her husband in the Dillon Hall chapel, where hundreds of students will say their prayers daily; the University is grateful to the family, as well, for allowing the students to have a share in the erection of this family memorial. It is too intimate a project for the general public; it must remain the innermost sanctuary of the memories of his family and of the school to which he gave the best that was in him.

PRAYERS: Coyne Patton, '26, was killed in an accident Saturday night. Dick Hoeson, '30, lost his grandfather recently. Ed Fallon, '26, writes to correct an error in a recent Bulletin which requested prayer for his mother; his mother, thank God, is still living, but she is in the hospital and he will appreciate prayers for her recovery. By request of the New Jersey Club the 8:30 Mass in the Serra chapel tomorrow will be for the repose of the soul of Andrew O'Keefe's mother. A deceased friend of a student. Five special intentions.