

Easter Duty
next Tuesday

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Way of the Cross
7:30 in the church

"Malos Male Perdot."

"He will bring those evil men to an evil end; and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that will render him the fruit in due season." - Words taken from the Gospel of today's Mass (St. Matthew, xxi, 33-46).

Throughout Lent the Church, through the liturgy, reminds us of the transfer of graces. On the second day she tells the story of the Roman centurion, who received a miraculous cure of his servant; of the centurion Our Lord said, "I have not found so great faith in Israel." On the following Monday she describes the Last Judgment, in which heaven is promised for a cup of cold water, and the "truly good" - the self-satisfied - are sent to hell for refusing that boon. Two days later she shows us Christ reminding the Jews of Jonas, who was sent away from the chosen people to preach penance to pagan Nineveh - and Nineveh did penance and was not destroyed. The following day it is the pagan woman of Canaan: When Our Lord told her that it was not good to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs, she humbled herself and reminded Him that "the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table;" and for her humility Our Lord said: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt."

The same theme continues. Yesterday we heard of Lazarus, the poor man, who received salvation while the rich man was buried in hell; today it is the wicked husbandmen, who killed the son and heir - and were rejected, the graces given to others more worthy. Tomorrow it is the prodigal son - and here let us digress a moment.

We miss the lower third this year. We miss the noisy laughter of the squirrels - of the extrovert freshmen who finished in the lower third of their high school class. They were the academic hoodlums, but they lent color to the campus, and most of them gave joy to the hearts of their spiritual directors. Perhaps they had no love for books, but they loved life. Prodigal sons in the class room, and at times in their conduct as well, they had at the same time, most of them, all the humility of the prodigal of the Gospel, who came back to his Father and confessed his sins openly and asked to be taken back, not as a son but as a servant. You recall what the Father did: He clothed him in his best robe, put a ring on his finger, gave him a banquet, and restored his inheritance.

There was only one class of sinners on whom Our Lord bore down - the prigs. He warned the self-satisfied Pharisees of the penalties that pride demands, of the hard-heartedness engendered by hypocrisy, preventing repentance, of the hell that awaits the uncharitable who "devour widows and orphans." We must thank God that most of our students are neither prodigal sons nor smirking Pharisees, that most of them come from good homes where humility, loyalty, obedience, respect for things sacred, have been imbibed from the cradle. But the present freshman class has somehow given us the impression that it is top-heavy with upper-third high school graduates who are completely satisfied with themselves.

We have no statistics to show what becomes of the lower-third freshmen who used to be admitted. It is a research problem that intrigues us. An impression gathered from more than twenty years in the class room is that many of the upper-third group got their averages more by the power of memory than by the power of thought. Such men usually fan out later in their course, when thought is demanded more than in the freshman year.

But the warning we started to give is the one in today's Gospel - that the graces you reject are given to others more worthy. Examples of this are myriad at Notre Dame - but they will have to await another bulletin. Meanwhile, take the lesson on faith.

Deaths: Deceased - Dr. Austin O'Malley, former professor; Jerome Alderman's sister; Eugene Witzger's grandfather; Andreas Gartin's uncle. Paul Kohnen's father is still sick. The mother of Chas. Cook, '50, is unwell. Four special intentions.