

Rockne Anniversary Mass



The good priest who sponsored the Cure of Ars and saw him through to the priesthood was a martyr of penance. During the hard days of the Revolution he was one of the "hedge priests" of France; at peril of his life he tramped from barn to barn to say Mass and administer the Sacraments to the scattered faithful. In his later days, when the Cure of Ars was his curate, pastor and curate vied with each other in fastings and penance—scourging their wasted bodies, denying themselves sleep and comfort, keeping long and prayerful vigils. And yet, when this good and holy priest was nearing the end of his mortal journey, he begged his curate to conceal from his flock all knowledge of these rigorous penances, "lest," he said, "they conclude that I am already in glory and so leave my soul to languish in purgatory till the end of the world."

This is the spirit of the true son of the Church. The closer one comes to God here on earth, the more he is impressed by two facts concerning the future life: 1. That nothing defiled can enter heaven; and 2. That no creature is pure in the eyes of God—save only His Immaculate Mother. Devotion to the Poor Souls has marked the Saints: they realize so much better than the rest of us what purgatory means. And wise children of light make every possible provision to shorten their own time in purgatory.

One year ago tomorrow Knute Rockne passed before the Judgment Seat of God. He faced the ordeal which every mortal man must face. Of that judgment we know nothing, but we have for our consolation two important facts. First, Knute Rockne was a good man, and the world was a better place, a much better place, for his having lived. And, secondly, it is unlikely that any layman who ever died in America has had more Masses and Holy Communions offered for the repose of his soul.

Should these two facts close our lips and our hearts to further prayers for him? It would be cruel charity indeed to pursue such a course. Such was not the way of the Saints; such is not the way of the Catholic Church. The Church allows Masses to be founded *in perpetuum*, so that as long as there are priests there will be Masses said for souls which have passed to judgment perhaps centuries ago. In the mind of the Church, the suffrages offered for those who no longer need them are applied to those who still await relief from their suffering. In this spirit of conditional suffrage (if outright supplication seems to task the charity of those of little faith) every good Notre Dame man will always pray for the repose of the soul of Knute Rockne.

Tomorrow is the first anniversary of his death; the President of the University will be celebrant of a Solemn High Mass for the repose of his soul. Every student in the University is asked to offer Holy Communion in union with the intentions of the celebrant. You who first heard of Notre Dame through Knute Rockne, you whose consciences were kept bright with the ideals of true sportsmanship through his influence, all you who sat at his feet as intimate pupils, and all you who had even the more intimate experience of pouring your troubles into his ear as you would to your father confessor and of receiving from him in return everything but sacramental absolution—you, his sons and brothers of Notre Dame, will be there if you know what loyalty means.

The Mass will be at 6:25. Make provision for confession tonight: after supper in the basement and Dillon Hall chapels, or after night prayer in the halls.

Announcements.

First Friday—day after tomorrow.

A student asks prayers for a friend who is very ill. Two deceased persons. Four special intentions.

Andrew Solnoky, of the Ave Maria press room, is in the hospital suffering from injuries sustained in an auto accident.