

Mass for sister of B. Nowicki, Saturday, 7:20 a.m., Dillon Hall Chapel.....

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
January 21, 1938

Listen to Catholic Hour
Sunday.....

Is Prayer Ever Wasted?

In the midst of the Church Unity Octave comes this letter from a N. D. student regarding a conversion. It needs no comment.

"My grandparents were married in 1885. Grandfather was of Scotch descent, a member of a family which was antagonistically Protestant. Grandmother, of Irish descent, was a member of a predominantly Catholic family. Although he was a member of no church and was belligerently opposed to all appeals that he attend church, all of his children were raised in the Catholic Faith with no opposition from him. He joined the Masons and until he was affected with his last illness was an exceptionally active member, holding numerous offices for long terms. At the same time my grandmother was a very devout Catholic.

"My mother bore six children of whom I am the oldest. From as far back as I can remember, my grandmother, my mother and her sister, my aunt, prayed constantly for the conversion of my grandfather, but seemingly with no success. My brothers and myself also were asked and very often did pray for his conversion. Personally, I had made three novenas (one at Notre Dame) and had often remembered this intention in my Communions. I know that my brothers did likewise.

"My grandfather, with his typical Scotch stubbornness, remained unaffected. In fact, his attitude was one of annoyance rather than merely disinterest. I can remember that when I was very young I often asked him why he didn't go to Church on Sunday with the rest of the family. These are the only times I can remember when he became gruff with me. My childish inquiries caused my grandmother and my mother much embarrassment when they were present, and they always hushed me.

"During the past summer my grandfather became seriously sick, and as his end grew near, we were summoned to him. At about noon on the day he died, my mother, without notifying the rest of the family of her action, summoned a priest who was an old family friend and a neighbor. Before the priest arrived at the home in the afternoon, my grandfather had become so weak that he had lapsed from consciousness and could not recognize any of the members of his family.

"When the priest arrived, he entered my grandfather's bedroom and was immediately recognized. The family withdrew to the parlor which was three rooms distant. Shortly afterwards the whole family heard my grandfather say loudly and clearly the word 'yes'. We learned later that he had made this definite reply to the priest's query: 'Mr. A....., do you want to become a Catholic?' The priest left the house to go to the parish church for the Holy Eucharist and for the Holy Oils.

"After he had gone, the family went to my grandfather's side, but he had again lapsed from consciousness. A short time later, the priest returned, entered the room, and my grandfather immediately revived again. He was received into the Church, made his first Holy Communion, and received the last rites.

"After a short period of time had elapsed, my grandfather became unconscious again and remained so until his death later in the evening.

"You don't have to tell my family about the efficacy of prayer....."

PRAYERS: Ill, (operation) Paul D. Clark '32; Rev. A. Shockoert. Seven special ints.