

Mass for Msgr. Pace,  
Sat. 6:25, Main Ch. Fr.  
O'Hara, celebrant.

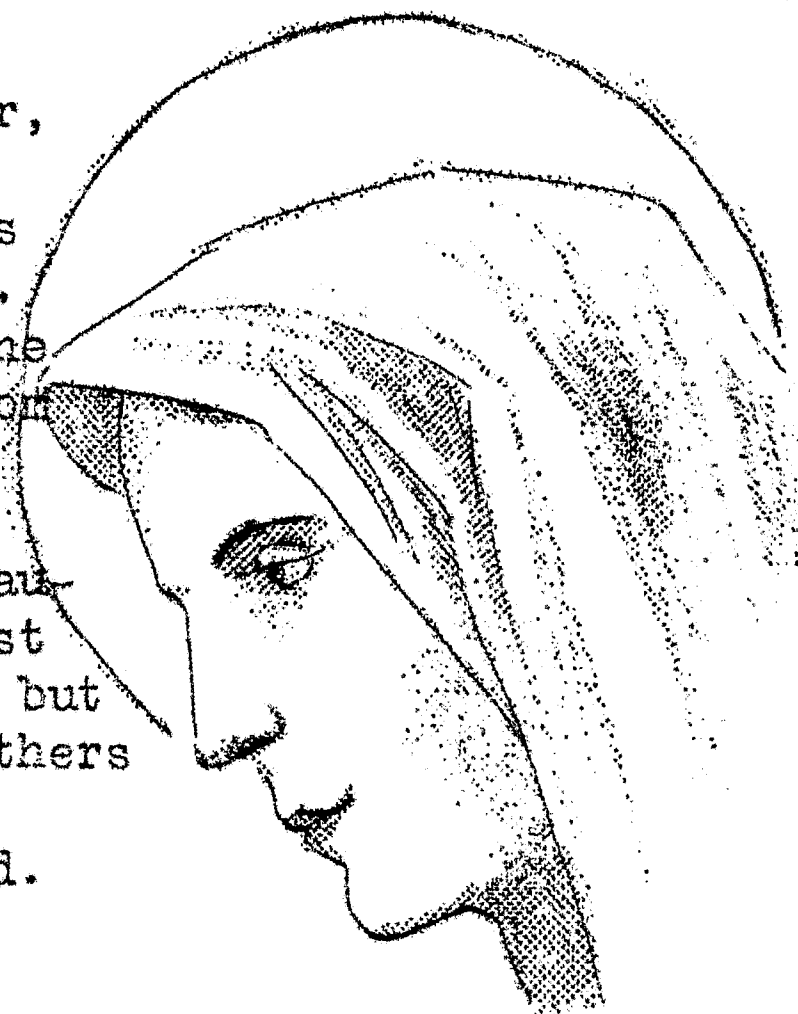
University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
April 29, 1938

Mother's Day Novena  
starts tomorrow; con-  
fessions tonight  
till ten.

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Modern Madonnas.

Between your mother and Mary there is a remarkable similarity. It is a wonderful thing to be a Catholic mother, for she continues a noble tradition begun at Bethlehem centuries ago. Someone surely looked upon your mother as a modern madonna when she smiled up with you in her arms. For a modern madonna is precisely what your mother is, one of that lovely race of Catholic mothers, the first of whom was Mary, the mother of the Incarnate God.

Life must have seemed suddenly very precious and very beautiful when for the first time your mother held you against her heart. She had often heard that life was important; but when life became personified for her in you, in your brothers and sisters, she knew just how important life really is. The child she cradled was to be the immortal child of God. She knew that hidden in your tiny body was the spark of endless burning, a soul that will live as long as God is God. And she helped the Creator bring you into existence. Her body harbored and nourished the breath of endless life. She and her husband in you have given to heaven someone who is capable of infinite happiness.



At that moment when she looked for the first time upon you, and knew you to be hers, she must have been glad that she kept herself pure. How terrible if her love had been spoiled and polluted by lust! How terrible if, before she and her husband had brought their love to be blessed at God's altar, she had used passion for the satisfaction of her own selfishness, and had then accepted to be the future father of her child a man who had given himself to animal instincts! Now she knows that love, not passion alone, called you into being.

When you were born, the divine madonna, leaning as she surely did over your mother, must have been pleased. Like Mary, your mother had kept herself a virgin. Like her, she has given a pure life to God. Like her, she has a strong, pure man for a husband. Mary is especially happy that, in an age that asks girls to betray their virginity and enter marriage impure, spoiled, soiled wantons, your mother walked in her holy footsteps. Oh, yes, Mary is pleased that your mother's attitude toward matrimony is God's attitude; that while many modern women imitate the sad, sinful pagan women of other days, your mother kept herself pure. And then in holy wedlock helped God to fashion another citizen for the kingdom of heaven. (With apologies to the Queen's Work Staff.)

Your mother was blessed in having God's mother, the greatest woman that ever lived, to guide and to direct her. Catholic men and women all down the Christian centuries have never forgotten Mary's influence. During the month of May you honor this mother of mankind redeemed in union with the Church, because Mary, the Mother of God, is an integral part of the Catholic system. Both Christ and His mother form an essential unit in the Christian dispensation. Devotion to one implies devotion to the other. They cannot be separated.

On Mother's Day you will honor your mother with a spiritual bouquet. But during the entire month of May in daily adoration, in daily Mass and Communion, in visits to the Grotto and in singing hymns there after supper, you will honor the Mother of Mothers. Just how deep lies your love and affection for these two mothers? Your love will be measured by the yard-stick of sacrifice....You may wish and wish and WISH to rise to the heights of strong will-power, of self-sacrifice, of manly devotion to the Mother of God, of zeal for the cause of Christ and His Church. But if your manhood is disfigured by a wishbone instead of being ennobled by a backbone, you will not be at the altar rail every morning, at the church in adoration, on your knees, telling your beads, at the Grotto singing hymns. No, you will never accomplish a manly deed until you have a spine running up your back.