

Tomorrow is the first  
Sunday of Advent. Begin  
now to prepare for ....

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
November 26, 1938.

Christmas by a  
month of fervent  
Holy Communions.

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As November Wanes, . . .

"I accuse myself of having prayed but little or badly for the dead, of having thought of them only on certain days and along with the crowd, forgetting that they may need me every moment of the day, that they are more defenceless than children and that our thoughts should never abandon their painful cradle . . .

"I accuse myself of having felt for the dead a merely conventional piety on their Commemoration Day, . . . of having considered All Souls' Day rather as 'the New Year day of the dead,' of having paid them a ceremonial visit and left my card. I accuse myself of thinking that I had discharged all my obligations to the dead in the war by having been moved at the unveiling of their monument as I listened to an operatic selection and the speech delivered by the Deputy Lieutenant.

"I accuse myself of having thought about the (war) dead only in the most conventional terms, . . . when I said to myself that we are indebted to them for victory, life and peace. . . . So it comes about that the dead of the war are of all the dead the most abandoned. Upon the pretext of doing them homage, I have forgotten that there may be necessitous souls to succor in Purgatory.

"I accuse myself of having practically forgotten the Dogma of Purgatory, of not having realized to what an extent it reveals the splendor of the divine justice, of not having realized that a too earthly soul, having caught a glimpse of Heaven, itself experiences the admirable necessity of preparing itself the better therefore by purifying itself-- that the dead are very great souls, which consider themselves not beautiful enough for the beauty of God, and which, like the Saints on earth, but more than the Saints, are consumed with a sublime ferocity of desire to eradicate every imperfection in themselves and to burn the old Adam.

"I accuse myself of not having realized what a close association of souls the Communion of Saints is, and that I am thereby enabled to help and even deliver the dead.

"I accuse myself of having forgotten that the Sacrifice of the Mass, being of infinite price, can, by the Blood of Jesus, quench the flames of Purgatory round one of the dead, and that the dead have a frightful thirst for it. And I have not given them to drink!

"I accuse myself of having thus, through thoughtlessness or latent rationalism, abandoned in their agony, for an indefinite time, those whom I loved best.

"I accuse myself of not having been a Good Samaritan to the unknown dead who languish in the abyss, and of having gone my way without listening to their complaints, to the 'Miseremini' which the Church borrows from Job and puts upon their pale lips . . .

"I accuse myself of not having realized that Purgatory is an immense appeal to charity on behalf of the dead, that it makes us live in their beneficent company, unceasingly requires from us a more immaterial and affectionate love than love in this world, and ever so much more efficacious proofs of love than our human gestures.

"I accuse myself of not having realized that the dead see us more clearly, understand us better, love and inspire us more than in their penumbral life.

"I accuse myself, therefore, in this month of the dead, of having suffered them, for lack of prayers and Mass, to lie in torment in the prison of their sins and my indifference.

"I accuse myself of having, in my own heart, allowed the dead to die."

From My Sins of Omission by Jacques Debout, (B. Herder, St. Louis.)