

University of Notre Dame  
RELIGIOUS BULLETIN  
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The Rev. James A. Burns, C. S. C.

It is not amiss that the first *Bulletin* of the year should be a memorial tribute to one of Notre Dame's greatest sons, the Reverend James A. Burns, Assistant Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross, who died Monday evening after a lingering illness at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Fifty-six years ago this fall, Father Burns registered at Notre Dame and began a most productive and zealous career in the service of God, Our Lady and Catholic education in America.

Upon being graduated in 1888, he entered the Congregation of Holy Cross and was ordained in 1893. After being a professor of chemistry at Notre Dame for seven years, he was made Superior, and Professor of Moral Theology and Scripture, at Holy Cross College, Washington, D. C. While Superior from 1900 to 1919, he also earned a degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Catholic University and was co-founder and organizer of the National Catholic Educational Association. His two books written during this period on the principles and growth of Catholic education in America are a testimonial to his scholarship and zeal.

His versatility, foresight and executive ability made him the selection for President of Notre Dame in 1919. To him Notre Dame owes much of its present greatness. He re-organized and modernized the different colleges and departments. He instituted a Board of Lay Trustees. He inaugurated an endowment and expansion program, which he directed successfully for two years after leaving the Presidency in 1922.

After another term as Superior of Holy Cross College, he was chosen Provincial of the United States Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross. During the next eleven years, he directed the affairs of the Congregation in the United States. In this office his academic and executive experience, his scholarship and his prudence were always of great assistance and help to the Presidents of the University during its continued modernization and development.

A career such as his demanded great fidelity, great generosity, great denial. Spartan-like throughout his life, he bore the responsibilities and crosses of his office, as well as a long, painful illness, with Christian patience and courage.

In an era of softness and love of ease, Father Burns was a challenging example of the real Christian. He cheerfully chose the hard way to serve God, and Our Lady.

