

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
March 27, 1953

Please Note This Change:

There will be no 10 o'clock Mass this Sunday in Sacred Heart Church.

Palms will be blessed at the 9 o'clock Mass. And the ceremonies at this Mass will hold a deeper meaning for you if you follow them with your missal. The liturgy will be carried out in all its solemnity here at Notre Dame -- a most fitting introduction to the proper observance of Holy Week --

The Chanting Of The Passion

This part of the ceremony at the 9 o'clock Mass will have about it the flavor of the Miracle Plays which belonged to the Middle Ages. Begun in France and Germany, they were brought to a fine fruition in early England when religious drama in the very sanctuary of the Church played an important part in the religious life of the people. Since the vast majority of people could not read, the good monks conceived the idea of enacting the Faith. Indeed, here we see the original purpose of Christian drama: it was intended as a sort of living picture-book. Even those ignorant of Latin (like most of us today) were to perceive by sight what was inaccessible to the ears. For this reason, also, the tendency to place the whole action visibly before the eyes of the spectator, to leave nothing to be done behind the scenes, or told by messengers, prevailed in mediaeval drama from the very beginning.

Most popular at the time were the stories of the Christmas and Easter events in the life of Our Lord. As the drama developed, and when pious legends were added to the Biblical narrative, the play was moved to the steps of the church. In due time, the lives of popular saints were portrayed. Then came portrayals of man and his struggle with evil. Much of this drama began in the 10th century. It gained momentum until complete cycles were performed in various localities (York, Coventry, Towneley, etc.)

This Sunday, at the 9 o'clock Mass, the story of the Passion of Our Lord will be related by the Chronista. Christus will enact His role of instructing, predicting, consoling His Apostles. Petrus will renew his protestations of Faith and loyalty, and then will deny Our Lord. The Moreau choir will portray the Jewish rabble-like turba, calling for the crucifixion of Our Lord. Even the notes employed by each character are distinct and meaningful.

Participation in the liturgy of Holy Week at Notre Dame might well be an important even in your Catholic education.

Be sure to bring your missal. It will enable you to follow the ceremonies with attention and devotion.

And remember: There will be no 10 o'clock Mass this Sunday.

Today: Feast Of The Sorrowful Mother

Tonight, at 6:45: Novena Devotions to the Sorrowful Mother, Sacred Heart Church.

Thanks for the alms: for the \$50 given by an anonymous benefactor for the pamphlet fund; for the 14.30 from the Campus B-X for charity.