

Missal Drive continues  
tomorrow in all the  
Freshman halls.

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
December 13, 1954

N.D. Spiritual Bouquet cards  
for Christmas - available at  
the pamphlet racks.

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### The Catholic Spirit Of Christmas

To arrive at the Catholic spirit of Christmas, one must first move patiently and prayerfully through the quiet corridor of Advent. Otherwise, the reality of the Incarnation will be all but smothered with artificiality -- as it is with much of our world today. Hence, don't take the routine of the market place for the spirit of the Birth of Our Lord. We live in a world of merchants who by-pass this holy season of preparation; who substitute cosmetic trappings and romantic tinsel for the great truth -- at once stark and sublime -- of the Christmas story.

Charles Dickens' character, Scrooge, called our material celebration of Christmas "Humbug!" And later, George Bernard Shaw dismissed the Joyful Season as "a conspiracy of shopkeepers!" They were unedifying, but terribly accurate, in their appraisal of the commercial travesty that it had, even then, become in many quarters.

For the Catholic, "all history revolves around that event which is central in liturgy as it is in life. Christmas is the birthday of an era, the inauguration of a culture, the beginning of a creed, the fountainhead of man's hope." The Catholic spirit of Christmas clings to the central character -- a little boy who was God -- born in an unlovely hovel where cattle sheltered against the weather; born of a Mother who was a Virgin. He came at a time when she was traveling. "She knew inconvenience and hunger. She endured failure, dejection, derision. Yet she was joyfully aware that her Child is God; that His Incarnation is real; that God is with us, not as a stranger on a perfunctory state visit, but a sharer of our nature and our lot. Her first guests were rough, uncouth shepherds -- as wild as the wilderness itself -- tousle-haired and tangle-bearded."

And so, the Catholic Spirit of Christmas, "to its last fiber, is dyed in divinity." Our Christmas begins at a stable, takes note of the characters in the drama, and closes with the quiet realization that God has come to redeem His people. How meaningless is the occasion without the central figure -- the Christ Child! "He is the imperishable beauty of the face of Christmas."

This tremendous spiritual truth underlies the origin, meaning, and purpose of all our Christmas customs and our rejoicing. It is a holiday only because it is first a holy day -- the day on which Christ, the Son of God, became man. And this Catholic spirit remains today what it was originally -- the happy recollection of the coming of the Saviour. It is only by recalling the birth of Our Lord that we take renewed courage to sing: "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will."

After all, it makes good sense to insist on the phrase: "Keep Christ in Christmas."

### If You Missed The Invitation

Yesterday at the Masses, you were asked to give a present to a child -- the Divine Child, in the person of the least of His brethren: the orphans, the poor, the forgotten ones who have appealed to the Bulletin for an alms. The Prefect of Religion will see that your gift gets to the most deserving, if you care to contribute.

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PRAYERS -- Deceased: friend of Tom Bennett of Sorin; grandmother of Henry Zang of Zahm; father of Alex Marcel of Dillon; friend of Ed Obermiller of Cavanaugh (jet crash); friend of Charles McDermott of Cavanaugh; father of John Collins of Badin; David Campbell (former professor); aunt of Don Gallagher of Alumni. Ill: mother of Prof. Wm. Burke; R.E. Olson (polio); father of Steve Evanowski of Old College; aunt of Ken Woodward of Howard; Neil C. Hurley, '31 (coronary); John J. Riley, '42 (concussion); Mrs. Mary Pardal; Van Wallace (improving); Mr. Wm. Dooley (Placement Office); Paratrooper James Neenan (critical).

Blood - Blood - Blood! We need blood donors for this week. Stop in at 117 Dillon.