

Tonight at 6:45 in
Sacred Heart Church,
Sorrowful Mother Novena.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
May 11, 1956

Remember: daily Adoration
during May, Monday through
Friday in the Lady Chapel.

Part Of The Notre Dame Story

In this month which for centuries has been dedicated entirely to the greatest Mother that ever lived -- and at a University likewise dedicated to Our Lady -- it should come as no great surprise that we make much of Mother's Day. For here each man finds two Mothers in his day, both inspiring, and both interested in his life here and in his life hereafter. There is yet another reason why Notre Dame men should be interested in the observance of Mother's Day --

Fifty-two years ago, a young, non-Catholic professor of history and economics from Notre Dame -- who was also its first football coach and athletic director -- stepped up to the rostrum on the stage of the English Theatre in Indianapolis. The occasion was a memorial service sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Eagles, and Prof. Hering was invited as speaker of the day. It was on this occasion that he urged his listeners to set aside a day each year as a tribute to mothers and motherhood. It was the first public plea for Mother's Day. Those who heard him liked the idea. The national organization of the F.O.E. adopted his plea and in 1912 every Aerie committed itself to the observance of this day. Their action so popularized it that the entire nation became receptive to the observance. In 1914, Congress set aside the second Sunday in May as the nation's Mother's Day. This particular date was suggested by Miss Ann Jarvis of Philadelphia; but the inspiration and idea was all Mr. Frank Hering's.

In accord with his activities, Mr. Hering was given the honor of delivering the first Mother's Day oration at the exercises held at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Alexandria, Virginia, May 10, 1925. The American War Mothers decorated him with their Victory Medal -- with the accompanying ribbon bearing the words: "Father of Mother's Day." For almost half a century, Mr. Hering was closely identified with the University. At the time of his death in 1943, he was serving his 15th year as a member of the Board of Lay Trustees.

It's small wonder, then, that Notre Dame feels a special obligation to keep alive, and to nourish, this particular day; and that she closely associates this reverence with that which belongs to another Mother -- the Lady of the Dome -- who looks down upon the entire campus as an inspiration and constant reminder of all that is noblest in motherhood. Because of the Mother of God, the mother of man is still "the holiest thing alive."

Good men realize this. "All that I am," said Abraham Lincoln, "and all that I ever hope to be, I owe to my mother." Nor is it exactly out of order to remind her occasionally that you appreciate her. Sunday would be a good day to do so. And give tangible proof by your prayers. If you missed the Novena for her, you still have the day to remember her in the Sacraments. She'll appreciate your sentiments much more if you substantiate them with something she treasures above all other gifts -- your prayers.

Read It Twice

"The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral -- a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body...The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature. God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation... What on God's earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?"

-- Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty