

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

Vol. XXXIX, No. 64

Friday, March 25, 1960

Notre Dame, Ind.

● TO THOSE WHO CAME FORWARD in answer to Wednesday's call for blood plasma, Joe Greeley, '27, says "you have truly expressed the spirit of Notre Dame". More donors are needed. So, if you have permission to donate, or if you are 21, how about stopping by 116 Dillon to make arrangements or call Ext. 348.

● The Columba Hall Mission Society offers you an added opportunity to help the Missions. At the Bengal Bouts, members of the Society will give you a chance to win one of 3 prizes to be awarded at their upcoming party. The prizes: \$100, \$50, and \$25.

● ALUMNI, FISHER, WALSH, AND STANFORD RESIDENTS take their turn at making a half-hour of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in the Lady Chapel of Sacred Heart Church on Monday.

● THE 10:30 MASS tomorrow morning will be offered in the Crypt. The Senior Retreat will be going on in the church at that time.

● TONIGHT AT 6:45 in Sacred Heart Church, devotions as usual in honor of Our Sorrowful Mother.

● PREPARE FOR MORE CHANGES. The Sacred Congregation of Rites will further simplify Church rubrics, the Missal and the breviary. This is expected to take place shortly before or after Easter. One of the effects of the new decree will be to quadruple the number of Saints' feasts of simple rank. This will result in greater importance being given to the Temporal cycle of the Liturgical year. Up to now, the Sanctoral cycle has tended to eclipse the Temporal.



Senior Retreat

BEGINS TOMORROW
MORNING AT 7:00 !

GET READY FOR
SPRING.....

● THERE IS A SPECIAL PRICE for faculty members and students who may wish to attend the production now being presented at St Mary's.

Wednesday-Saturday Evening

March 23-26

8:15 P. M.

Orchestra - \$1.75

Balcony - \$1.25

Saturday-Sunday Matinee

March 26-27

2:15 P. M.

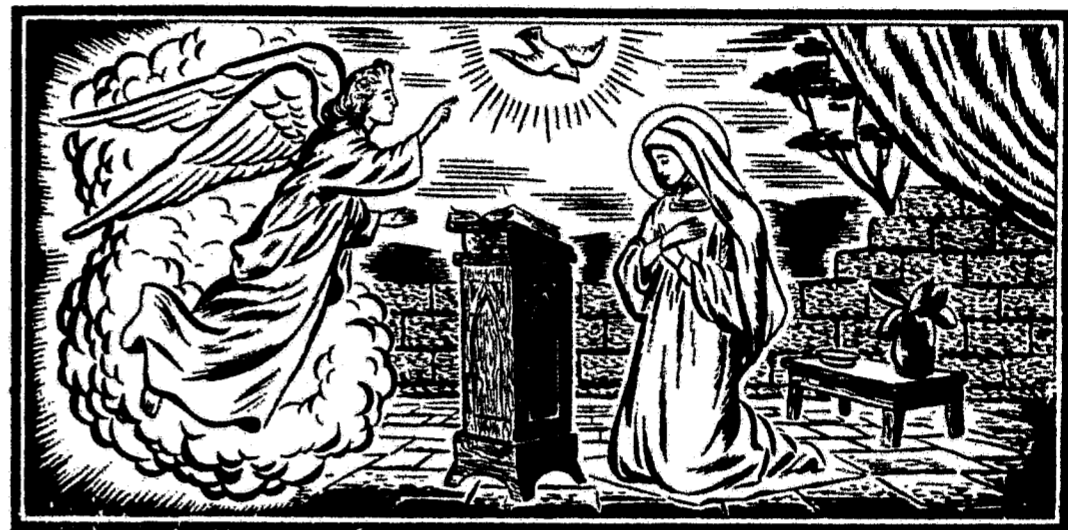
Orchestra - \$1.25

Balcony - \$.75

● PRAYERS. Deceased: Friend of Mark Breckel, Off-Campus; aunt of Louis Padberg of Morrissey and Jim Holmes of St. Ed's; uncle of Mike Morrow of Morrissey; friend of Tim Dunn of Morrissey; friend of Gregg W. Keegan, '38. Ill: Brother of Fr. Edward Keller, C.S.C.



TODAY IS THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION. We commemorate on this day the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to our Lady that the Son of God would assume a human nature in her virginal womb. This event is one of several portrayed in the Mystery of Mary, now being presented at St. Mary's. About the play, E. Martin Browne says:



"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."

THE MYSTERY OF MARY is an adaptation of a large part of the Lincoln Cycle of Mystery Plays. This Cycle was mistakenly called *Ludus Coventriae* until recent researches led scholars to agree that it originated in Lincoln, England, about the year 1425. The whole Cycle is a compilation of many short plays, covering the entire span of human history as known to medieval man: the Creation and Fall, some scenes from the Old Testament, the life of Mary, the life of Christ, and finishing with the General Judgment at the world's end.

Plays on these subjects were first given by the clergy in the larger churches as part of the services at great Festivals, especially at Christmas and Easter. By the fourteenth century they had grown so popular and so elaborate that they had to be given outside the church, in the open air, acted by the laity. In many cities they were played on wagons, each wagon carrying a separate scene, moving in procession about the streets. The Lincoln Cycle, however, is devised for a fixed 'multiple' stage which, like many paintings of the period, shows several scenes at once.

The material used by the anonymous writer is mainly biblical. His sources for the early life of Mary are the early Christian books, *Protevangelion* and *The Gospel of Mary*. Throughout the Cycle, a strong accent is placed on liturgical worship; all the music prescribed in the text comes from the liturgy as performed in the author's day, and he dramatises the origin of the canticles, *Magnificat*, *Benedictus* and *Nunc Dimittis*.

This liturgical accent, however, is incidental to a lively drama, which was doubtless the most elaborate entertainment of the year, and had a popular appeal which has hardly been matched by the theatre of later periods. In true medieval fashion, the author brings his story home to his audience by depicting it as happening in the conditions of his own time. The Trial of Joseph and Mary by ordeal, for instance represents a common practice in medieval law. The characters are

fully human: Joseph is given a ready wit, as in their different ways are the Summoner, the two gossips and the Seneschal; Joachim, Anne and the Shepherds are touching in their simple emotion; and the Passion and Resurrection sequence, which in this adaptation is introduced through the prophetic visions of Simeon, reaches the heights of tragedy and of joy.

The Lincoln Cycle is the latest in date of the English Mystery Plays, and is notable for its use of characters representing abstract concepts. These form the *dramatis personae* of the Morality Play, a type of drama which was then coming into vogue. THE MYSTERY OF MARY is introduced by Contemplation; later, as Peace, she takes part in a debate between the Virtues which leads up to the Incarnation. The child Mary has five companions who represent aspects of the godly life. The two accusers at the Trials impersonate the vices of the tongue. Death appears to vanquish the overweening Herod. Thus the Cycle stands midway between the liturgical origins of Christian drama and the Morality Play. One of the finest and most elaborate of these plays, THE CASTLE OF PERSEVERANCE, dates from about the same time and comes from the same part of the country as this Cycle, while the greatest of them, EVERYMAN, is of slightly later date.

The decor of this production is adapted from the series of frescoes by Giotto in the Arena Chapel at Padua, Italy, where between 1303 and 1306 the painter depicted the entire story told in the Cycle, scene for scene. Giotto's treatment is simple and monumental yet full of human warmth and emotion; and it often gives the impression of having been inspired by a dramatic performance. The world of medieval Christianity was not divided by national barriers; and it is not surprising that the frescoes come very close in spirit to the English Cycle. Accordingly, it seemed appropriate to use the Italian master as designer-in-chief.