

Religious Bulletin
December 1, 1926

And Now to Go On With Our Story.

The football team is speeding across New Mexico today, far enough away for us to have a heart-to-heart discussion of last Saturday's game which no inveterate crape-hanger can mail on to the boys to dampen their spirits for Saturday.

It's a good thing we lost. A defeat gives a good lesson in sportsmanship. What you expect of these boys -- who are only boys, no older than yourselves -- is no less than a national championship. You expect them to make all the sacrifice that goes with Notre Dame football, keep their heads under rooms of publicity and no end of flattery, stand the terrific nervous strain of a ten-game schedule, travel all over the country, and bring home a championship that will let you lord it all over Padunk when you go home for the holidays. And when they crack under the strain you act as if they had betrayed you.

What have you done to support them? One of the players said before leaving that there was no danger of his fumbling this week, as his hand was in perfect condition; ~~xxxxx~~ after victories it was squeezed to death. They asked for your prayers -- repeatedly. What answer did you give them? The following table compares the number of Communions on the eight days preceding the Army game with the eight days preceding the Tech game:

Army game	1195	1282	1251	1255	1260	1264	1153	1343
Tech game	852	890	911	966	1082	890	760	857

The totals are 10,003 and 7,008. The eight days before the Tech game were the first eight days of a Novena for the team. (The ninth day, Sunday, the number was 973.)

Sacrifice? You don't know what the word means. You got up at four-thirty to share the thrill of victory after the Army game; but that was a stunt. Any high school kid could do that. Mob spirit carried you through that. Homecoming was another thing. There were 1065 Communions the day before Homecoming, and 852 Saturday morning. You were asked to make the sacrifice, not to break your fast after midnight Friday, and it was too much. You were asked to do it for the team, to start a Novena that day. You couldn't do it. You took the rest of the season for granted -- and you squealed like babies when the team you had deserted caved in.

It's not only here; it's hereafter. One of the players said last week, when he was going over the prospects of a defeat at the hands of Carnegie Tech, that he was almost glad we lost to the Army last year, because it showed up the Alumni. The year before they slobbered over the boys and Alma Mater; last year when the boys looked around after the game they found only three or four of the old guard there to shake their hands and pat them on the back and say, "Never mind, boys, you'll get them next year." That's not Notre Dame spirit.

Defeat is a good thing. It shakes out the jolly-rich. A chiropractor would have gone broke around here Saturday evening; and Sunday. The Welcome Home Sunday morning was typical. You made so much noise that you could almost be heard in Orrin Hall; but you didn't make it for long; you were too hungry. -- And this defeat did another good thing: it changed the character of the aftermath in South Bend Saturday night. God was less offended.

You can do as you please about it now. Quit your cribbing about the team and the catches and the schedule and all the rest of that rot. If you want to blame anybody, blame yourselves; blame your poor sportsmanship. And if you want to help the team, you know how you can do it. (And in your prayers remember seven urgent intentions recommended by your fellow-students.)