

Religious Bulletin

March 19, 1929

What Washington's Birthday Did.

You can't begin to appreciate what one week-end can do to a Lent until you study a few figures. The elements were set against us this year, and bad went to worse until recovery seems impossible. Here are some of the simple factors that went to disrupt this year's Lent in comparison with last year's:

1. Washington's Birthday came on Ash Wednesday last year, and no one went home; this year it came on the day corresponding to the First Friday of March last year, and the week-enders took a week off.
2. Lent started nine days earlier this year, and it witnessed some really cold weather, of the kind that kills the piety of comfort-loving Americans.
3. A student was killed during the fourth week of Lent last year; the influence of that accident is seen from Thursday on that week.
4. A cold snap killed the Novena for a Happy Marriage this year (on the fourth Thursday of Lent).

The following table shows the loss and gain in Holy Communions this year as compared day by day with last Lent:

							Totals
			42	54	-30	14	80
177	-69	-57	-110	-48	-728	-346	-1181
-119	-168	-132	-114	-24	78	-193	-672
157	-19	12	82	-24	-21	17	204
376	90	46	76	9	-18	-5	574
52							Net loss -943 ave. 29

The only bright spot in the above table is the fourth Sunday, Laetare Sunday, which corresponded with St. Patrick's Day last year. The pick-up over that week-end, however, did not compensate for the Washington's Birthday week-end, which broke the back of Lent this year.

What's the trouble? Plenty. You are just the kind of Catholics Father Cavanaugh pitied in his sermon last Wednesday night; you haven't the glorious kind of faith Father O'Donnell described in his sermon Sunday night. There are approximately 100 more students registered this semester than there were a year ago, and during the first semester of this year the average daily reception of Holy Communion was an even hundred more than the average for the first semester of last year.

You break one resolution and you quit. The devil taps you on the nose and you take the count. Is that the kind of fight that wins? Is that the sort of Fighting Irish we are nursing along this year? Here's a set of seniors, about to go out into the world as a finished Notre Dame product -- and a whole drove of them can't pull themselves out of bed two days in succession. Catholic leadership! It's going to be in fine hands. Let's hope there are some Amazons waiting for them who will at least see that they make their Easter duty. Freshmen! We seem to have more dumb ones this year than any year since the crap-shooting interlude of 1918.

Have you no pride? If a man has a spark of ambition to achieve something, you can insult him into action. Have you no folks for whose sake to make something of yourself? We hear plenty about the folks when trouble comes and you "don't get a break." Have you no sense of shame to keep you from misrepresenting the ideals of your school? I got the low chart that worries the school, but the lack of resolution that causes it. Notre Dame wants to turn out men of character; material seems to be lacking.

Requiem High Mass at 6:20 tomorrow for the repose of the soul of Austin Barlow's mother, by request of the students of the fourth floor, Walsh Hall.