

Religious Bulletin
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"The Souls of The Just Are In The Hand of God."

"Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. O Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit. Holy Mary, pray for me. O Mary, Mother of grace, Mother of mercy, do thou protect me from the enemy, and receive me at the hour of death....."

"Come to his assistance, ye Saints of God, come forth to meet him, ye Angels of the Lord: Receiving his soul: Offering it in the sight of the Most High. May Christ receive thee, Who hath called thee, and may the angels bear thee into Abraham's bosom."

With these words of the Church's liturgy on the lips of devoted bystanders, Joe Ford breathed forth his beautiful soul into the hands of his Maker. It was a hard day for them, but a glorious day for Joe, for it was his birthday in heaven. Nineteen years and nineteen days God gave him on this earth - and He gave them back to God well accounted for. It was the day of his triumph.

All his life Joe was a good Notre Dame man. He was with us only a few months - and his letters home showed how much he enjoyed those months, for he found himself in an environment for which his soul had longed. He had received Holy Communion every day here until last Tuesday, when his illness prevented it; he had done the same thing at home for years. His God was his Food; his God was his Strength; his God was his great Love.

That is why Joe went to God unafraid. When he was told that an operation was necessary, his only concern was for his parents. He didn't want to bother or worry anyone. He asked for a general confession and Extreme Unction; the anointing was delayed until later, as real danger was not yet apparent. When he complained that he could not pray as he wanted to because pain distracted him, he was reminded that his sufferings offered for the Poor Souls were the best prayer he could make. Then he said: "I'll offer the operation for you and for Sister here -- and for the Bishop. I must not forget the Bishop." Bishop Chartrand had led him to daily Communion from boyhood.

Small wonder that he was not afraid. The only fear of God he ever knew was the fear of offending Him. He obeyed God in small things and in great - because he loved Him above all things. That is why he was a good Notre Dame man: he was a good Catholic.

The world is better off for his having lived. As a star athlete in high school he naturally drew attention - and his smile, which came right from his beautiful soul, won other boys to clean living and to the love of God. His smile was innocent -- perhaps angelic is the better word. (His Bishop used to call him Michael Angelo.)

You could not set it all down on one page - but it is all written in the book the angels read - and we can ask them to help us be more like Joe. The story of his passing was sung by the Church in the Divine Office the day he died:

"The souls of the just are in the hands of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction; but they are at peace..... O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory, for the memory thereof is immortal, because it is known both with God and with men." -- Wisdom, iii, iv.

Pray and offer today's self-denial for the repose of his soul, and for the comfort of his parents. Requiem Masses for the repose of his soul are as follows: Monday, 6:30, the University; Tuesday, 6:30, the Freshman Class; Wednesday, 6:30, the Indianapolis Club. PRAYERS: Chas. Hirsch's father is very ill. Wm. Lavin, a nephew of Fr. Lavin, was killed in an accident recently. Four deceased persons, relatives or friends of students. Five special intentions. Fr. Donahue, C.S.C., Superior General, asks prayers for his father, who was seriously injured Thursday when he was struck by an auto.