

Bengal Bouts
tonight

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
March 3, 1933.

First Friday
Benediction
7:00 - 7:30

The Sign of the Cross.

Whene'er across this sinful flesh of mine
I draw the Holy Sign,
All good thoughts stir within me, and renew
Their slumbering strength divine;
Till there springs up a courage high and true
To suffer and to do.

And who shall say, but hateful spirits around,
For their brief hour unbound,
Shudder to see, and wail their overthrow?
While on far heathen ground
Some lonely Saint hails the fresh odor, though
Its source he cannot know.

-- Cardinal Newman, 1832.

This sentiment of an Anglican (Newman became a Catholic in 1845) sets in relief the true meaning of The Sign of the Cross, as opposed to the maudlin sentimentality displayed by the picture which closed in South Bend recently (a day and a half early). The "courage high and true" of the martyrs distinguished them among all men of all time. That they were not sobbing fanatics you may judge from the following brief sketches of early martyrs taken from the Breviary for this season of the year:

St. Lucy (Dec. 13) rebuked the Prefect and he replied with a Latin pun: "Words (verba) will soon cease when we come to blows (verbera)." She answered: "God's servants will never want words, for the Lord Christ has said: 'When ye shall stand before kings and governors, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.' (Matt., x, 18-20; Mark, xiii, 9-11) God protected her against a shameful attack on her chastity. Pitch, resin and boiling oil were poured upon her and she was then set on fire, but the fire did not take hold. Other cruelties followed, and at last a sword was thrust through her neck.

St. Marcellus, Pope (Jan. 16) was sent by the Emperor Maxentius to care for wild beasts in a menagerie. After nine months he was rescued; he then preached in the home of Lucina, a wealthy Roman matron, who turned her home into a church. When Maxentius learned of this he transferred the wild beasts to the church and set Marcellus at his task again. In the midst of this filth and squalor the enfeebled Pope died.

St. Prisca (Jan. 18) was thirteen years old when the Emperor Claudius ordered her to sacrifice to Apollo. She refused, and was buffeted and sent to prison. She was flogged by husky executioners, then boiling tallow was poured on her, and she was sent back to prison. She was then thrown to a lion, but it crouched at her feet. After being starved for three days she was tortured on a rack. Pieces of flesh were torn from her body with iron hooks, and she was then thrown on a burning pile. She escaped death from all these tortures, and was finally beheaded. No tears are recorded of her.

St. Sebastian (Jan. 20), a soldier, was shot through and through with arrows, and left for dead. Rescued and nursed back to health, he heard his old master, the Emperor Diocletian, passing his hiding place one day, and boldly came out and rebuked him. He was beaten to death.

STATIONS TONIGHT: The Way of the Cross will be held in the church this evening after the 7:30 Benediction. It will end before 8:00 o'clock.

PRAYERS: A brother of Fr. Minnick, C.S.C., is very ill; so is Arthur Hoono's grandfather. Two thanksgivings (Nos. 12 and 13 from the Depression Novena); three special intentions. (The 7:00 Mass Sunday will be for the next one of us to die; the last one brought Jim Hanley the grace of Baptism on his deathbed.