

May Devotions  
Grotto & Church  
Sunday evening

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
April 29, 1933

President's Day -  
General Communion  
tomorrow morning

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Pent House or Pew?

Be it said to the credit of O.O. McIntyre, his "Day by Day" column runs much more to wisdom than to sophistication, and now and then he sounds a deep in human nature. He has gone one step further in a recent letter, and has grazed the supernatural. On April 15 he turned the column over to a man-about-town who has lately been seen attending church; and to McIntyre's further credit, he calls his friend's letter "auspiciously interesting." We quote what space permits of his letter:

"... I was not caught up by any religious frenzy or emotionalism. I merely dropped into church one evening because I had no place in particular to go and was a bit blue. I expected to nod through the services and did. I left when the organ played an exit tune, and dropped into a speak-easy.

"So far as I recall I do not remember any part of the services. My only impression was that it was about the most restful place I had encountered during the past stormy three years. I have been quite fortunate. As you know you have met me here and there and in Europe as a rather high-flyer.

"I have occupied a penthouse and was host to the customary crowd of after theater drink cadgers. Also I have been escort for a number of stage and screen beauties. Indeed, I was once engaged to a movie star. Due to a far-seeing father I have an income although I was nipped in the market.

"There have not been many mornings in the past 10 years I have not awakened in a slight fog. I rarely became drunk, but by bed-time I usually had an edge. My constitution stood it better than most. For some time I have been fed up. No man can drink steadily without collecting a lot of shady companions. I was the victim of several shakedowns.

"I noticed that most fair weather friends bored me unless I had several drinks. But the mellowed I grew the more I thought they were the best fellows in the world. The next day I would realize popularity was due to my paying the checks. Still I would go back to them. I have looked upon the church as a sort of haven for frustrated nit-wits, seeking something they could not find. I was impressed and swayed by the writings of Robert Ingersoll."

Briefly, he went to church again, and then again - not always, but repeatedly, and for the past five months. Of the crowd he met there he says: "They have a forthright wholesomeness I rather thought had gone out. They stand for things, say what you will, that have made this nation endure. One pastor has even had dinner with me. We played a game of chess and afterward talked until midnight. I might add that he did not once mention his calling -- something one cannot say for show folk, financiers, artists and writers."

He protests that he has no intention of becoming religious - his materialism is too deep for that. But his curiosity is quite aroused by the fact some of his old friends have treated him with new respect - some have even expressed a desire to go with him. "I am wondering," he says, "if it is the slight undercurrent of a spiritual awakening. Has the misery of the times turned people from the husks? Maybe it will be different if and when prosperity returns. Or perhaps I am just one of those burnt-out boys who, having had my fling, selfishly wants others to settle down, too. But my honest conviction is that humanity is drifting toward things more worth while."

What McIntyre's friend hasn't discovered yet is that the principle which has given him repose after his pent-house existence, has also given Dante and Michelangelo and Palestrina and Vincent de Paul to the world. It is an Active Principle; may he yet find it so!