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University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
September 14, 1933

Freshman Mission  
begins Sunday

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The Rough-Neck Chains.

Two members of the community died this summer, Father Miner and Brother Valerian; your prayers are requested for the repose of their souls. Father Miner was never actively associated with the University. Brother Valerian was, and it was because of his activity in your behalf that his name was held over for a special obituary notice today.

For many years Brother Valerian was in charge of the steam plant. When rheumatism crippled him so badly that he could no longer do active work, he took charge of the Carroll Hall locker room. There he began a campaign which in course of time became national in scope. For years he had twisted wire into chains for rosaries - and there are some of his beads on the campus that have been in service for more than forty years. In the locker room he noticed that most of the boys wore no medals - so he made his strands longer and fashioned chains for scapular medals. He sold the chains for ten cents each, and gave the profits to the Bengal Mission.

On a good day his rheumatic hands, gnarled and twisted, would make ten chains - and he had another dollar for the missionaries. Demand came from other halls than Carroll, and the output was finally commandeered by the Prefect of Religion for the whole University. Outsiders saw the football players wearing medals, and requests came in by mail. The number of calls swamped the facilities of this "cottage industry," and Father Doremus conceived the notion of making scapular chains of the bead chain used by electrical companies - and the "sissy chain" came to the rescue of Brother Valerian's "rough-neck chains." (Last year a mile of this material was wrapped around boys' necks here and away from here; this year's stock is 7,000 feet.)

Brother didn't quit the field, however. He sat up in bed and made more chains. When the pliers slipped from his fingers he would take up his beads - and every day he said fifteen decades for the boys, another fifteen for the community, and as many more fives and tens and fifteens as he could get in. "It helps me to pass the time," he would say; "I'm never lonesome." But he would pick up the pliers again and go back to his chains. He left enough of his wire chains for one hundred rough-necks when he died.

You are not going to forget him in your prayers. That wouldn't be fair. All these prayers he said have helped to make Notre Dame the place you love today. Say your beads for him (get a pair at the pamphlet rack in Dillon Hall if you need to), and offer many Holy Communions for the repose of his soul. The greater portion of Brother Valerian's 88 years were spent in God's service in religion, but it would be mean of us to excuse ourselves from praying for him on that account. He helped to revive devotion to the scapular among boys all over the country; the Blessed Virgin loved him for that, and we want to say her prayer for him.

The Feast of Our Lady's Sorrows.

Tomorrow is the feast of the Seven Sorrows of Our Blessed Mother - the patronal feast of the Congregation of Holy Cross. It is a day we should cherish, not only for what it means to the Congregation, but for its implications in our life as Notre Dame men. Among the sorrows of Our Lady we should give prominent place to the actions which we, her unworthy sons, sometimes perform in derogation of her honor.

Offer Holy Communion tomorrow for your own mother, and in reparation for any unworthy actions you may ever have performed; ask of Our Lady the grace always to be a fit representative of Notre Dame and of your own mother.

PARISH: Elizabeth Ahlering, of the Athletic Office has undergone an operation for appendicitis; A deceased relative of Wm., James and John Bartley; the deceased mother of Harold J. Cosgrove, '24. A friend of a student is dying with sleeping sickness.