

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
November 30, 1934.

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Novena for Purity.

Tomorrow morning starts the important novena for purity in honor of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady. Go to confession tonight if necessary.

The program suggested for the nine days--December 1-9--follows:

Hear Mass and receive Holy Communion daily;  
Say 3 Hail Marys morning and night;  
Recite the Litany of the Blessed Virgin every day.

Daring God.

"Robert Ingersoll, atheist, orator, rhetorician, listener for the rustle of angelic wings in grave-side eulogy, is reported on occasions to have thrust a dare at God. He is said to have challenged the Almighty during his anti-Biblical lectures to strike him dead, and so prove that the Almighty existed. Mr. Sinclair Lewis is mentioned as having affirmed the same dare. A bold dare? Yes, and No.....

"The circumstance that God did not take either man at his word, to provide the audience with a thrill, does not prove that there is no God; and had either or both been stricken, it would not prove that there is a God. Physicians would find for heart disease, blood clot, or cerebral hemorrhage. Satan dared Christ to leap off the pinnacle of the Temple at Jerusalem to prove that He was the Son of God. Christ refused. His was not the business of taking dars. Yet He brought back a son to a poor widow who not only did not dare Him to do so, but did not ask Him to. Offhand an atheist, anarchist, skeptic, earth worshipper is safe enough when he challenges God to strike him dead. God does not strike people dead when they challenge Him, any more than He always gives life when they beg for it. He works in eternity, for eternity. His vast purpose is to save life ultimately, not to lose it.

"Even men do not take seriously challenges of half-wits or sensation hunters; or of the well-balanced when the outcome will be obvious disaster. An expert with the pistol can kill unerringly from a certain distance. You stand at that distance from him, offer your heart to prove his skill on. Will he accept your dare and kill you? Certainly not. He will hit the white roundness of a half-dollar piece at the stipulated yardage. Hitting that will prove his skill equally as well as if he had killed you.

"Mr. Robert Ingersoll and Mr. Sinclair Lewis stood back the distance, asked God to fire--or else admit non-existence. It seems that Mr. Ingersoll and Mr. Lewis attached altogether too much importance to their roles in the drama we call human life when they challenged God to show that He existed by killing them off.

"Had either man entered the cage of a lion, the lion might have obliged them by doing what God did not do, following their challenge. And had the lion not done so, could they then deny the existence of the lion? Indeed, the circumstance that Mr. Ingersoll died in his own time in the way of nature, and that Mr. Lewis still lives following his histrionic challenge is a good proof not only that God exists; but that He is a merciful, very patient God."

--Ave Maria, December 1, 1934.

PRAYERS: Deceased, grandfather of Walter O'Brien (Walsh); friend of Bill Ellis (Alumni); friend of Francis Crosiar (Dillon); friend of a student. Ill, Reverend Rudolph Scheid, Rochester, N.Y.; John Paul Cullen '22, seriously injured in an auto accident; father of Paul Conaghan '20. Five special intentions.