

You admire courage. Are  
you courageous this Lent  
in atoning for your sins?

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
February 13, 1937

Be on time for Mass  
(6,7,8,9) Sunday; and  
come to the main church.

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The World's Greatest Sportsman.

Truly enough, the victor scintillates before the grandstands amid thunderous applause. He skyrockets through life with the lion's share of praise. He is written about, cheered about and courted until some new meteor eclipses the lustre of his star.

That is natural. Sparkle and brilliance, necessarily, force themselves upon the eye. ...But anyone who has exchanged blow for blow in the game of living must admire a good loser. It is easy enough to occupy victorious headlines, but.....it is the essence of heroism to stand squarely under defeat. That is real sportsmanship.

There was One who above all men exemplified sportsmanship. It isn't irreverent to say that Christ was the world's greatest sportsman in the sense we have in mind. Think of his courage.

He could have come to earth surrounded by armies, clothed in the splendid trappings of a king, hailed as a great conqueror, loved by everyone instead of by a few. He could have made Himself a universal success. Instead he chose a stable, persecution, obscurity, and finally dereliction. From Gethsemane to Calvary there was utter failure, but because He drained the cup of sorrow unflinchingly, His was a worldwide victory. It was Redemption.

No heart can fail to quiver with admiration at the foot of the cross. The terrific sorrow of the God-Man, the frightful laceration of His body, the wrenched, bleeding, pitiable spectacle of the slaughtered Lamb of God. You would think God Almighty had had enough and that He would call on His angels to annihilate the execrable mob. Instead He gasps out: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." That was sportsmanship, infinite, divine sportsmanship.

For us it is an undying example. It may be a game, it may be studies, it may be the grind of life. You may be lying prostrate "amid the dust of the mounded years." Nevertheless, you are never the loser when you can face apparent failure with a stout heart...The unknown heroes of everyday life are continually receiving the seal of God on their works. He gazes down at them from the Cross, which is the symbol of suffering, the tree which blossomed forth a Savior, in whose branches was born Divine Sportsmanship. (Our Sunday Visitor.)

Christ's Living Example.

The example of Our Lord is living again today in His Vicar on earth. Read the following editorial written by a Norwegian non-Catholic for the Duluth Store News of Duluth, Minnesota:

Interesting and vital news is pouring forth each day from the Vatican in Rome. There a courageous head of a great church is battling for his life with the odds very much against him. Leading physicians have given up all hope for his recovery. Those sturdy legs which carried him up high mountains when he was a younger man are paralyzed and will possibly never serve him again. He is suffering intense pains. They are pains that would have caused the less courageous of us to have given up many weeks ago. Yet that wonderful character in the Vatican continues to direct the destinies of his church. He continues to take an active part in daily life. Although he is ruler of the spiritual lives of a great percentage of our people and does not happen to be at the head of the church with which we affiliate, we have more admiration for that battler in the Holy City than we can express. He's a far greater character than all of the present-day and historical dictators combined. We're not so good at praying, Holy Father. You see, we have sort of gotten out of the practice. We are, however, praying for you. Nothing would please us more than to have you win your present battle and continue to do your good work for a great many years.

PRAYERS: (deceased) Rev. Patrick J. Scanlon, Chicago. Ill, Fred Snite '33; Theodore Williams (Brownson), operation.