

(FOR THE CATHOLIC STUDENT AT NOTRE DAME)

It would kill a mother
to learn that her son was
living in mortal sin.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
May 5, 1944

Make the Novena for
Mother's Day. Attend
Mass every day.

A Mother Visits Her Dying Son.

For you, last Monday may have been just another day. For some, it was the beginning of another week of strenuous physical and intellectual effort. For others, it was May 1. For Catholics, it was the beginning of the month consecrated to Mary their Blessed Mother.

Apprentice Seaman Jerry Butler can tell you about a wonderful thing that happened to him on the first day of this month. Our Lady came to him and performed a miracle--well, almost.

The story begins in a Navy station in northern Michigan. A few days ago, the Navy inducted a young man into the Service. Two days after the induction, the seaman fell dangerously ill. The authorities decided that his case could best be treated at the Great Lakes Naval Base. A plane was chartered and a doctor was assigned to accompany the patient to Chicago. The plane ran into a heavy fog. Flying conditions became so poor that the ambulance plane was grounded at the South Bend Airport. The patient, still in serious condition, was brought to the Notre Dame Infirmary, the Navy Sick Bay. He was unconscious, and had been for some time.

When the Sister in charge of Sick Bay saw the seriousness of the case, she phoned the Chaplain. A priest was in the sick room in five minutes. Who was the boy? Was he a Catholic? Nothing was known about him, only his name, Gerald Butler. He wore no medal, and his collapse had taken place so suddenly that his Navy records were not complete. In his unconscious state he could not identify himself.

And then our Blessed Mother came to look after her sick son. No sooner did the chaplain appear at the sickbed than Jerry's mind began to clear. Strength came to his faculties and he was able to respond to the priest's first question. "You are a Catholic?" A bow of the head gave the answer. The chaplain took out his rosary and dangled it before the boy, who clutched it in recognition. When the priest recited "My Jesus, mercy," "Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony," and other short prayers, the young man responded.

Confession followed, and after it Extreme Unction, the Sacrament through which Christ comes in His power to console and to strengthen those suffering a dangerous illness, and to prepare them for immediate entrance into heaven. When all was over, the priest and the nurse heard Jerry say something like. "Thank you, Father. Thank God." Once more he fell unconscious.

By noon Monday flying conditions had improved and the journey to Great Lakes was continued. The Catholic Chaplain at the Navy station was informed about the case as soon as Jerry was put on the plane.

A letter arrived from the chaplain yesterday. It read: "Gerald Butler died last evening."

We believe in the supernatural. We believe that our Blessed Mother came to help Jerry prepare for a happy death. God be praised, for giving us such a mother!

PRAYERS: (deceased Mother of Brother Clarence, C.S.C.; Father of Pvt. Jerry Ryan, (Cav) grandmother of John Graif, (St.Eds); Mrs. Longstreth, aunt of Father Neff, C.S.C.; Edward Patrick Barry; father of Ed Heinz, '40. (Ill) cousin of Pfc. Guido Alexander; friend of Ed. Pazmino (BP); brother of Brother Alan, C.S.C.

DON'T BREAK YOUR NOVENA SUNDAY. FAST FROM MIDNIGHT. GO TO HOLY COMMUNION WHEREVER YOU ARE.