

University of Notre Dame

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

November 28, 1944



His Good Works Will Follow Him

As early as five o'clock, during the dark mornings of the winter months, the light on the back porch of Corby Hall would be aglow, and a priest could be seen pacing slowly back and forth. This was often the manner in which Father Leonard Carrico began his busy day. The cold made little difference to him. He seemed to love it, for on bitter mornings he would take his familiar place bundled in overcoat, his old fur headpiece and mittens. The half-hour before community meditation and the offering of his Mass were moments of prayer. This was his favorite spot for praying part of his Divine Office. The Office could have been said in the warm chapel, only a few steps from his room, but he brought with him from his native state of Kentucky a love for the outdoors, and he felt drawn to praise God there. The Breviary seemed always to be in Father Carrico's hand as he journeyed from one building on the campus to another. One might have got the impression that he was always behind, always wedging in a few psalms. It would be more true to say he was making the best of his time, praying between duties, supernaturalizing the work of the day. Once you knew him, you soon discovered his intense devotion to duty.



Rev. J. L. Carrico, C.S.C., Ph.D.

Father Carrico spent fourteen years as Director of Studies of the University. Sometime ago he told a friend, "I want to work as long as I am able." Though in poor health for the past two years, his condition became critical only a few days before his death on Tuesday evening, November 21, in the Student Infirmary. He died in the harness, the way he wanted it.

In the rush of duty, Father Carrico did not lose sight of the world around him. In his quiet way he helped the poor. A "lifer" in a Kansas penitentiary was often the object of his solicitation and his correspondence. Little children knew him, and their letters had to be answered as well as those containing weighty University business. He could go from details of academic importance to a discussion of the things that interest children, like the family dog or cat. His associates on the campus frequently found a note of jest from him in their morning mail. As he went from detail to detail, he was liable as not to preface his business with a recently heard story that had been humoring him. Everything about his charity rang true. Nothing was false, nothing posed.

A match for Father Carrico's charity was his honesty. He detested fraud in any form, and he was scrupulously just in his dealings with others. He could have played favorites. But in making decisions affecting students he thought both of academic standards and the best interests of the student. Where justice demanded correction or reprimand he administered it. If students found him unrelenting about regulations, it was only because he was a man of principle, judging every case on its own merits.

Father Carrico started his career at Notre Dame in 1908 as a member of the department of English. Fellow priests call him "A great teacher." Students knew of his genius in the classroom, for many made efforts to be registered in his course, and a number of them took up writing as a profession and achieved success.

Father Carrico was not alone at the Judgment Seat of God. With him were all his good works pleading mercy and reward, for "blessed are the dead who died in the Lord . . . let them rest from their labors, for their works follow them." (Mass for the Dead)