

Adoration in the
church is in the
Lady Chapel behind
the Main Altar.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin

March 21, 1946

Adoration closes at
5:00 P.M. with Benediction,
On Saturday, at 11:00.

Afraid of Confession? - Read This.

"The seriousness with which he (Father Damien who cared for the lepers at Molokai) regarded the obligations of the confessional is shown on the occasion when the Provincial of his Order tried to visit him during the time when the law of isolation was being enforced. Damien had not seen anybody from the outside world for several months and on the calm morning when the little steamer blew a blast from its whistle and hove to off Kalawao it must have presented a welcome sight to his eyes. He rushed to launch a boat and, with several of the more fit lepers rowing, put off to the steamer where, at that very moment, the captain was refusing the request of the Provincial that he be allowed to go ashore for even half an hour.

"As Damien's boat came alongside the vessel and as his hand sought the accommodation ladder the captain warned him not to come aboard, reminding him of the new law. The disappointed priest pleaded that all he wished was a few minutes alone and in privacy with his Superior so that he could make his confession. The captain retorted that he had no alternative but to obey the command of the authorities.

"Then," said Damien, "I shall make my confession here."

"The hubbub of the ship's life died down and a stillness enveloped the decks as he knelt in the sternsheets of his tiny craft which was rising and falling with the slow motion of the easy swell. The Provincial took his place at the rail above, and this courageous act of self-abasement that was so thorough and complete began before the casual eyes of the ship's passengers and crew who thronged the upper deck in interested groups, staring down, some awed, some puzzled, but all silent.

"The final words of contrition came, the sentence of penance, the murmured balm of absolution, then the priest, taking his seat once again, made a gesture to his crew. The oars dipped and the boat gathered way on the calm water, slipping quickly from the shadow of the steamer's bulk. Except for a deliberate upraising of an arm in silent salute to his Superior, Damien ignored the ship. With his gaze fixed on the shore, he sat, steering the boat, a rigid figure with both hands gripping the tiller bar. Never once did he look behind and the audience who had witnessed the baring of his soul were as disregarded as though they had never existed. . .

"The motley throng of mixed races and of varying or of no creeds that made up the ship's company, these men who lived adventurous lives in remote places and who saluted personal courage as being the first of human graces, had been stilled to an unusual quietude, profound and respectful before a kind of bravery that was new to them. And to their credit it must be said that when the steamer arrived in Honolulu and they were met by journalists, not one word of what they heard on that peaceful morning was repeated."

(From the biography "Damien The Leper" by Farrow, and quoted in the Catholic Digest for March. Copies of this biographies can be obtained in the Main Library, in the Office of the Prefect of Religion, and in the Cavanaugh Hall Library. It's worth reading. Not an uninteresting page in the book.)

PRAYERS: (deceased) father of Vince Hogan (St. Eds); Father Thos. Maguire, brother of Father Joseph Maguire, CSC. mother of Robert Laughery, '40. (Ill) Father Norman Johnson, CSC. Two Special Intentions. One Thanksgiving.

"Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us."