

Adoration all day,
with Rosary and
Benediction at 5.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin

May hymns at Grotto
every night at 6:30
Pray for 8 Spec. Ints.

May 10, 1949

Total Abstinence.

Father Gillis, the well-known Paulist priest, recently recommended total abstinence in his weekly column. A critic replied that St. Thomas never recommended total abstinence. Father Gillis, writing in the Tablet (Brooklyn), came back with this:

"There was little, if any, need of total abstinence in the world of St. Thomas; there is abundant need of it in ours. The 'Angel of the Schools' lived in a wine-drinking country; America is the land of whiskey and gin and the deadly cocktail. In St. Thomas' day, and in his land, boys and girls in their teens didn't know the taste of hard liquor. He could not have seen--he could not have dreamed of--kids of 14 and 15 helping home from a party a boy of their own age too drunk to walk.

"St. Thomas never saw what I have seen repeatedly, men and women drinking hard liquor in a club car from start to finish of a five or six hour journey. He never heard college girls, on the way home for Christmas or Easter, remarking in their own lingo, 'I was pie-eyed' or 'blotto,' as nonchalantly as if they were speaking of a cold or headache.

"St. Thomas never heard of Alcoholics Anonymous. The need of such an organization would have horrified him. If he had been told that in one country alone there were 500,000 (some say 650,000) all but hopeless victims of alcohol, (not wine-bibbers, not beer guzzlers, not even periodical drunkards) but real addicts, he could hardly have believed it.

"But one thing St. Thomas did know and did teach -- the Catholic doctrine of the occasions of sin. Anyone to whom strong drink is a proximate occasion of sin is bound under pain of sin to abstain. If all such persons did abstain we wouldn't need to discuss the question whether alcoholism is a disease or a sin.

"There was a greater theologian than St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Paul, writing under divine inspiration said, 'It is good not to eat flesh or drink wine nor any other thing whereby thy brother is offended or scandalized or made weak.' He was dealing with a different problem from ours, but the principle is of universal application. And is there anyone who fails to see that alcoholic drink, used in the American manner, is a stumbling block to vast numbers of our brothers?' Those who take a pledge not because they need it but for the sake of their brethren are followers of St. Paul.

There is even a greater than St. Paul. St. John the Baptist took neither wine nor strong drink, and Our Saviour praised him as he praised no other man born of woman. The modern popes have blessed and enriched with indulgences the Total Abstinence Union of America. The bishops of the 2nd Plenary Council of Baltimore have recommended membership to all the faithful."

Tony Pay News.

Tony was very low yesterday morning. But he rallied somewhat during the day. Though he now has moments in which he responds rationally to questions, he is unconscious for the most part. He is not in the clear at all; thus he still needs the prayers of every single student. Did you say a rosary for him and go to Mass, as was suggested in that special bulletin yesterday? The Seniors in the Air ROTC are having Masses offered for Tony. Don't forget Bob Fitzpatrick who has a broken back and is suffering considerably. (This is the report as of 10:00 P.M. last night)