

Tomorrow afternoon at
4:45 -- the Holy Hour
in Sacred Heart Church.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
October 27, 1954

Religious Survey blanks are
now being returned to the
Prefect of Religion.

How They Found The Body

This is not a Sergeant Joe Friday episode, but it's just as good -- maybe better. And long after Dragnet is forgotten, chances are you'll remember this character. For he has been looming more important with the years. Furthermore, the month of October gives a special meaning to his case.

Francisco was one of the three children at Fatima to whom the Blessed Mother appeared in 1917. He died in the deadly influenza epidemic which swept the world in 1919, and was buried in the little village cemetery. During one of the apparitions, Lucy the eldest child had asked if they would go to heaven. Our Lady answered that they would. But Francisco, she said, would first need to say a great many Rosaries. He did not forget the admonition -- he prayed the Rosary frequently, and practiced penance, too. Two years later he died, probably a saint.

The years passed. Fatima became a great shrine in honor of Our Lady. The message she delivered to the three youngsters spread throughout the world. The time came when Church authorities wished to move the earthly remains of Francisco to the shrine to rest beside those of his sister, Jacinta who had died about the same time. But when the grave was opened, the body of an older boy was found.

In the haste of burial in time of epidemic, some mistake had been made. The father, Manuel Marto continued to dig below the grave just exhumed. His boy had been dead thirty years; some mistake as to location was possible. He could have been hazy about the details accompanying the burial ceremony, especially when so many funerals had taken place in a short interval.

At last there was the sound of his spade against wood. A moment or two longer, and Manuel Marto, aged 80, looked upon the bones of the boy he had last seen when he was 47 or 48 -- the age at which a father begins to realize fully what a privileged and holy thing fatherhood really is.

And what was the detail about the skeleton that made old Manuel sure he had at last found his son's remains? It was the particular Rosary entwined in the skeleton of hands -- the Rosary that had transformed the lad into a saint as he prayed from bead to bead, as he meditated on the mysteries of the life and death of his Redeemer. Old Manuel had no more reason to be troubled, or to doubt. The Rosary was genuine evidence.

Manuel knew that the boy was with God. Our Lady had promised it. He also knew that only a little while remained to separate him from that lad who even now is waiting for him. Only a few more Rosaries to say, and the two will be reunited forever.

It could be that Our Lord and His Blessed Mother will recognize you best through the Rosary that you carry. Can you afford to be without one? The Rosary and penance made a saint of this lad, and opened the gates of heaven for him. They can do as much for you.

This is the month of the Rosary. By now, you should have the Rosary "habit." Stay with it as we move into November. What's to prevent your imitating Francesco -- and someday being recognized by Our Lady by that same devotion? Indeed, what better thing could happen to you? The Family Rosary is now established in every hall. Make it a part of your daily routine.

PRAYERS -- Deceased: father of Ed (Alumni) and Tom (Zahm) Hughes; Patricia Kelly.
Ill: Bill McNamara, '20. 4 Thanksgiving intentions.