

Tomorrow: Half-day of
Recollection in Morrissey
Chapel, beginning with...

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
December 7, 1954

... Mass at 8, and conference
at 9:30 and 11:00, under the
direction of Fr. Boarman, CSC.

Exactly One Hundred Years Ago

On December 8, 1854, two young men from Notre Dame hurried through the streets of Rome toward the Basilica of St. Peter. It was early in the morning, but the city was already astir. Indeed, Mr. Gillespie and Mr. Letourneau knew they were in for a day of history -- "a day that was to provide the most glorious sight that men have beheld since the Council of Trent..." It was the rainy season in Rome; yet this day proved to be an exception. But let Mr. Gillespie tell the story:

"At eight o'clock in the morning, our little party was at St. Peter's. Mr. Letourneau and I had the happiness of getting very good places. We were at one side of the Confession of St. Peter, right at the foot of the altar at which the Holy Father was to say Mass... Standing there I saw the procession of the prelates who preceded the Holy Father, pass on their way to the choir.

"At about nine o'clock I was still standing there, within two feet of the file of soldiers that were to keep a path clear for the procession which now began to come in at the front entrance. First came the Canons of St. Peter's, then priests with the title of Monsignor, then Bishops and Archbishops -- there were 186 Bishops in cope and mitre -- finally the Cardinals, and then the Holy Father wearing the tiara, and walking under a canopy.

"When the Bishops were all seated, Terce was sung. Then the Holy Father began the Mass. After the Gospel had been sung in Latin and in Greek, a number of the Bishops knelt before the Holy Father and prayed him in the name of the whole Church to pronounce the Immaculate Conception an article of Faith. Then the Holy Father rose, and knelt to intone the Veni Creator. He then addressed the assembled Bishops. He was seated on the throne without the tiara. After addressing the Bishops, which he did not do without shedding tears -- tears of joy -- he put on the tiara and arose, and then proclaimed the triumph of Mary. The bells of Rome, and the cannons of St. Angelo were heard at the moment he proclaimed the Immaculate Conception. It was a feeble expression of the joy that every Catholic felt. The Holy Father then continued Mass.

"Before giving the last Blessing, he intoned the Te Deum. The choir of St. Peter's finished the first verse; but when it came to the second verse, the whole vast congregation, which completely filled St. Peter's, sang, and alternated every other verse with the choir. Never, I suppose, since the Council of Ephesus, did the faithful show so much joy.

"In the evening, the whole city of Rome was spontaneously illuminated. Everyone vied with his neighbor to show love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin. How my heart beat with joy as I walked for three hours through Rome and saw the whole of it illuminated, not in honor of any queen of this world, but in honor of the Queen of Heaven, the Immaculate Virgin (What a pleasure to write Immaculate Virgin!). After walking through many of the streets, and seeing many of the beautiful churches illuminated, we went to the Pincio, and it was from that place that we saw one of the wonders of the world -- the Piazza, the Basilica, and the Cupola of St. Peter's illuminated!"

Tomorrow, the Masses in Sacred Heart Church will be as on Sunday. After the 9 o'clock Mass, the University will again be solemnly consecrated to the Blessed Mother. Then both clergy and laity will move to the entrance of the University to bless and dedicate the Marian Year statue at the circle. This public ceremony, a pledge of devotion and love for the Patroness of this school, will bring to a close the Marian Year.

PRAYERS - Deceased: aunt of Jim Hurley of Morrissey; daughter of Dr. Greene (team physician). Ill: nephew of Rev. John Walsh (polio); father of Ed. Enochs (O-C).