

Tonight at 6:45 in
Sacred Heart Church:
The Lenten Series...

University of Notre Dame
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...the official Lenten substitute for those exempted from fast and abstinence.

They Give You The Fidgets

Ever watch a sizable number of the Old Guard (born Catholics) move in the main Church for Mass on Sunday? They offer a rare study of human nature in confusion, calling uneasily on the Holy Ghost for assistance. For example:

There's "No-Brakes" Charley. He does the quarter-mile up and down the aisles before he makes up his mind there's a future for him in the front seat. All the time he has been scanning the pews for a Novena booklet -- he will now (during Mass) make up for the service he missed on Friday evening!

There's "Nosey" Norbert. From his place in the front pew, he whirls frequently to keep an eye on activities in the choir loft, in the sacristy, and elsewhere. Again, he's the self-appointed G-Man, eyeing the ushers who take up the collection; he can also tell you who were there, and how much they dropped into the box.

There's "Hygiene" Harry, very busy dividing his time among fingernails, his glasses, and innumerable itches here and there. Alongside him you'll find "Hank the Hacker" whose bronchials aren't so quiet in the mornings. He's a regular \$2 bugle, off-key and plenty loud about it as he wheezes and snorts. The din is terrific.

There's "Research" Reggie, a rugged type, who marches in, loaded down with three editions of prayer manuals, bent on a comparison of indulgenced prayers in each volume at his disposal. He sits quietly throughout, calculating the years of indulgences available. He's nearer to a "Doctorate" than he is to Mass.

And don't ignore "Fashion-Plate" Freddy -- because he doesn't ignore you, or anyone else -- as he makes mental notes of the A.M. ensemble of the local clothes horses, labels their tastes revolting, and decides then and there what he'll wear on the Central Senior Prom weekend, regardless of the decisions of you big hicks.

Hardly unnoticed (he likes it that way, too) is "Rattling" Roger -- a daredevil with his Rosary, swinging it to and from banging it on the pew, pausing for frequent repairs, dropping it constantly. You feel he has a choice, but can't decide whether to choke himself, or maim for life the four people nearest him.

And then there's the great empty-handed mob -- like curious Hoosiers at an auction -- gaping, ill at ease, wishing it were time to leave.

Their pumber is legion -- these charter members of the Old Guard. And they work on your nerves to the point where you begin to imitate them, individually or collectively, for no good reason at all. Watch them, and they'll even suggest new areas of activity. Christian culture labels them "outlaws." They're a public nuisance, foreign to refinement and healthy piety.

The remedy -- A Missal at Mass helps you most; and helps others, too.

Every intelligent person needs a missal at Mass to follow the drama unfolding before him, and to catch the power and beauty in the liturgy. You will move up to Calvary with the priest, and offer the Victim with him, participating with him in the sacrifice, saying the same words the priest says. The missal helps you most to do these things at Mass. There are good missals available from the class chaplains. Like the disciples at Emmaus, you will get to know Our Lord better in the Breaking of the Bread.

PRAYERS -- Deceased: father of Brother Armin, CSC (Post Office); father of Brother Geraphim, CSC. Ill: father of Bill Wightkin, '50; grandfather of Bob Duffy of Cavanaugh; nephew of Terry Crowley of Lyons; father of Vince Carroll of Farley; aunt of Rev. James Gibbons, CSC.