

Tonight at 5 p.m., in  
Sacred Heart Church, His  
Eminence, Valerian Cardi-  
nal Gracias, of Bombay...

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
November 21, 1955  
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They Wanted the Mass

...receives an Honorary Docto-  
rate. Drop in to honor him,  
and to distinguish yourself.  
It's an historical event!

Among the war stories that linger on is the one told about the group of American soldiers who were to attack a specified enemy post at dawn. The Catholic boys in this particular outfit were not anxious about the weather, nor the treacherous terrain ahead, nor their supply of ammunition. They knew that danger lay ahead, and so they asked the Chaplain for Mass. But a priest in white vestments would have been a clear target a mile away; and any gathering of soldiers would have been imprudent, on this clear, moon-lit night.

So what did they do ? They dug the strangest sanctuary in history -- six feet long and four feet deep, and four feet wide. They spread a blanket on the bottom, and there the Chaplain set up his altar. The scattered congregation could see the priest as he went through the Mass. C-ration cans took on a new dignity that night. They covered the candles, and were thoughtfully slit so that the candles glimmered only toward the congregation, and not in the direction of the enemy.

The Church thinks that the Mass is so important in the life of military men that authorities have relaxed the laws regarding liturgical colors in danger zones. A Chaplain may use camouflaged vestments and altar cloths whenever white and the liturgical colors would constitute a danger in a combat zone. That privilege was granted for the duration of the war.

What Do You Think ?

Your own idea of the Mass being important is best answered by the number of weekday Masses you attend here at Notre Dame in your own hall chapels with no inconvenience whatsoever. The person who assists at Mass frequently is big-minded and big-hearted. Through Mass he praises and thanks his Heavenly Father in a manner that pleases God infinitely, because the Mass is the act by which one prays with Christ. There is no more powerful prayer. On this occasion one becomes magnanimous and generous. The Mass prompts those in attendance to think of the sick, the dying, the Poor Souls, the needy, sinners -- and at the same time brings God's all-powerful and merciful Hand to assist them. We can pray in our rooms as we work -- even as we play. These petitions are good and effective. Yet they do not have the power of the Mass, because they are our own, and only our own effort. The Mass is the prayer of Christ and so is the prayer most pleasing to our Father in Heaven. When we are present at the Holy Sacrifice, Christ takes our prayer and blends it with His, thus allowing us to pray with His own tremendous power. If you are anxious about anything, you will make use of the daily Masses in your hall chapel.

It's the Mass that matters most. When enemies of the Church set about the business of destroying the Faith, the first edict invariably forbids the celebration of Mass. They strike at the heart of the Church when they do so, knowing that once they rid the land of the Holy Sacrifice, the rest will be easy. They may be diabolical; but they are accurate.

Good Morning, God!

Among all civilized peoples, it is customary to proffer a pleasant greeting to all whom we encounter in the morning -- the rector, hall-mates, and all others with whom we come in contact. God deserves a similar token of respect and friendliness. It is not necessary to kneel down by your bed -- the important point is to meet God with your mind and heart, even though you be washing, or shaving. The little cards with the Morning Offering are intended to help you over this first hurdle of the day.

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PRAYERS - Deceased: father of Rev. Albert Heinzer, CSC; friend of Chris Walsh of Cavanaugh. Ill; father of Walt Smithe of Lyons; Rev. Norman Johnson, CSC (USAF).