

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Saturday Is Freshman Day

Saturday is the Feast of St. Edward, patron of the founder of Notre Dame -- Father Edward Sorin. It will be observed as a holiday -- which means late rising, Mass at 8 o'clock in Sacred Heart Church, followed by breakfast. The Mass is reserved for Freshmen; and the day is being set aside especially for their orientation.

Why for Freshmen ? Because you can't very well be a good Notre Dame man without knowing something about Notre Dame. And you'll never get to know Notre Dame without learning about Father Sorin. That's the reason for the Mass Saturday in Sacred Heart at 8. Father Arthur J. Hope, CSC, author of the history of Notre Dame, will tell you some things about the school that only he can tell you. And he'll paint a picture of Father Sorin that only his vast amount of research can substantiate. If the world thinks Notre Dame is a great school, you will discover why when you listen to Father Hope tell of Father Sorin and the early days.

Every year, on this blessed occasion, October 13, Notre Dame pauses to recall the founder and his co-workers. Nor is it out of order to think of all the good, holy, men down the 114 years who contributed their prayers, and talents to the building of what we enjoy today -- a first-class university.

Did they love the Mother of God very much ? The stories about them, and the measure of their devotion, and the hazards they encountered, and the limitless expanse of their faith -- you'll discover you haven't met braver men in fiction or fact. You'll even discover that there were times when Father Sorin wasn't much farther than one step ahead of the sheriff.

You're used to seeing pictures of Father Sorin as an elderly man with a long beard. But when he came to Notre Dame he was only 28. It was a cold day, in late November, with a sharp wind coming off the lake, and deep snow on the ground -- and, save for the log chapel, nothing but a wide expanse of open country. A man had to have a lot of daring, and optimism, and enthusiasm to come up from the little mission near Vincennes and start from nothing. But that's the kind of man Sorin was. He tells us that he took the five Brothers into the little log chapel that belonged to the Indians, and kneeling on the dirt floor, spread his great black cape over the shoulders of his companions, and vowed that he, and they, and all who should come after him until the end of time, would find in our Lady's help the answer to all their needs. Your little Notre Dame Prayerbook goes on to describe the event:

"This first arrival on the spot now called by the blessed name of Notre Dame du Lac... made on the newcomers an impression which time will never obliterate. At that moment, one most memorable to me, a special consecration was made to the Blessed Mother of Jesus... With my five Brothers and myself, I presented to the Blessed Virgin all those generous souls whom Heaven should be pleased to call around me on this spot, or who should come after me..."

Saturday, after Mass, take a walk around the lakes -- as they did on that first day. And if you have a moment, drop in at the Community Cemetery on the western edge of the campus, and say a prayer for all the good Notre Dame priests and Brothers of the past who rest there beneath simple white crosses. Their only monument is your school. Tomorrow, they deserve a rich remembrance in our best prayers.

Remember: The Founder's Mass is at 8 o'clock. The church is reserved exclusively for Freshmen. See that you don't miss this part of the Notre Dame Story. And offer the Mass for all the benefactors of Notre Dame.