

Confessions tonight and tomorrow morning in all hall chapels.

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Communion at 10-minute intervals in Dillon chapel all morning, every day.

Whee!...The Orphans!!

A check of the Communion records for today finds us a little disappointed. Why ?

Well, at Christmas time a man is usually at his finest -- almost what he should be. He's less selfish than at any other time; his mind is on others. He's a bigger and better man; he's almost what God wanted him to be. Yes, at Christmas kindness rules him. And his sole objective is to share his charity with others.

Those nearest and dearest, and most deserving are, obviously, his good father and mother. It is unthinkable that he could forget them. No, they are worthy of his finest effort. When it comes to people who sacrificed most for him, they rate first.

This morning, we started the Novena For Parents. We expected 5000 Communions -- for the very logical reason that 5000 Notre Dame men must have parents. That they are living or dead is inconsequential -- they're still eligible for, and deserving of our prayers at this time. We thought everyone here at school would be eager to show a measure of love and affection to the two people to whom he owes most in all the world; to the two people whom God commanded each of us to revere and love; to the two for whom, we thought, each would feel obligated to show some mark of appreciation at this time of year.

The Novena is a gift that does not cost you a cent. It does involve a little -- very little -- sacrifice on your part: getting up for Mass and Communion, and taking 10 minutes to say your Rosary -- that's the Novena we suggested, nothing more. That's the traditional gift of Notre Dame men to their parents.

Gifts, you know, take their value from the love of the giver -- not from the price tag they bear!

Come to think of it, the good father and mother must have arisen early on many a morning because of you! But they didn't mind it. No one does, when motivated by love. Real love makes sacrifice willing and easy.

"Only at Notre Dame," we've heard the comment about our Novena For Parents, "could this happen -- the idea of a spiritual bouquet card for Christmas! A Novena as a Christmas gift for one's parents!" And invariably you will hear the added comment "Surely, it was worth our sacrifices to keep him in a school where this kind of thing can happen."

Hundreds of you were there, this morning, bright and early, in the hall chapels, keeping alive one of the finest of Notre Dame traditions. But many -- far too many -- with small minds and smaller hearts, forgot all about parents and everyone else. The only evidence of Christmas spirit, and Christmas charity about the latter was a prolonged snore, as they dreamed on and on into the breakfast and lunch hour.

An orphan couldn't have cared less! And this morning there were many orphans in evidence. And it set us to wondering if, sometimes, men are so taken with material things, with ease and luxury, and amusements, and diversions -- that they become flabby and lazy, and spiritless, and blind to values and loyalties.

There's still time to do something about the Novena. There's nothing to prevent your finishing on the 20th - your first day home. And we'd like to use all 5000 Novena Cards printed especially for this occasion. If you slipped today, get moving tomorrow, and no one will be the wiser for your forgetfulness this morning.