

Evening Mass at 5:10  
continues through  
Friday.

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
January 22, 1958

Public Holy Hour tomorrow  
at 4:45 as usual. Drop  
in for part or all of it.

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A Great Fighter  
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Saturday, the final day of the Church Unity Octave, is the feast of the conversion of the gamest fighter the Church has ever known. His name was first Saul, later changed to Paul.

As a highly intelligent young Jew, Saul found his religion and his race extremely unpopular in the ancient pagan world in which he lived. There were two courses open to him: he could soften up on his inborn convictions; or he could hold them vigorously and fight. He chose to fight. First of all, he opposed the new Christian sect that was splitting up his own people. Wasn't it trouble enough, he reasoned, to fight united against those pagan Greeks and Romans! Bungling, fanatical Christians he would help smash!

At the stoning of the first martyr, Stephen, there was Saul. In the thick of the great persecution at Jerusalem Saul "worked havoc" on the early Church. He forced his way into Christian homes, dragged Christian men and women into prisons. He terrorized them with force and fear. To the High Priest at Jerusalem Saul hurried, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He demanded authorization to oppose Christians in the North. He got the authorization.

With official letters in his pocket he tore on horseback up to the city of Damascus. On the way something strange happened to him, something that changed the entire direction of Saul's life. As he rode, a heavenly light struck him to the ground, and he heard a kind, masculine voice call to him: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" In response to his "Who are you?" there came the unmistakable reply, "I am Jesus Whom you persecute. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

That was enough for Saul. No pussy-footing, half-way measures for him. He had been wrong with all the violence of his ardent soul. He would now be right with the same force magnified and made Christlike. With characteristic suddenness he turned Christian -- saint to the core, apostle to death. He even changed his name from Saul to Paul. Back to Jerusalem he traveled, now the firebrand of Christ. Out of Jerusalem, by land and by sea he journeyed, fighting intrigues and insurrection among pagans and Jews. He preached, wrote, suffered, fought. But note this difference now: as a Christian he never exerted physical violence on others. On the contrary he suffered that violence himself.

According to his own testimony, bitter Jews scourged him five different times, with 39 lashes on each occasion. Three times he was cruelly beaten with rods. Once he was stoned. Three times he suffered shipwreck. At other times he was in danger with his own people, the Jews, or fell among robbers. Often, he says, he was in peril in the wilderness. Nevertheless, through all opposition, he fights on -- in labor and painfulness, in watchings, and hunger, and thirst, in fasts often, in cold and nakedness. Near the end they put him in chains in Rome. Finally, they behead him outside the walls of the city.

The Faith meant so much to Saint Paul that he would ride through fire and brimstone to bring it to others. Could you use a little of that zeal in bringing someone to share in the Faith? That's the idea of the Church Unity Octave.

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PRAYERS REQUESTED - Deceased: father of Don O'Sullivan of Alumni; friend of George Saksefski of Fisher. Ill: nephew of Dave (O-C) and Mark McShane of Cavanaugh. 2 sp. int's.  
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This Friday Evening -- No Public Novena Services in Sacred Heart Church.