



*Mother's Day* TRIBUTE  
to the Mother of us all. . .

Notre Dame, our Mother,  
Tender, strong and true,  
Proudly in the heavens  
Gleams thy gold and blue;  
Glory's mantle cloaks thee,  
Golden is thy fame,  
And our hearts forever  
Praise thee, Notre Dame;  
And our hearts forever  
Love thee, Notre Dame.

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NEW LOOK AT PENANCE AS SACRAMENT

The scandal of our generation is that so many are exposed to the vast workings of the sacramental system without perceptible progress in the spiritual life and without appreciable impact upon the society of modern man.

ROSARY AND HYMNS. . . .  
. . . at the Grotto. . .  
. . . . . 6:45 p.m.

Tonight Farley Hall  
Monday Breen-Phillips  
Tuesday Howard Hall

A large proportion of "good" Catholics seem to be satisfied with minimum graces and with spiritual mediocrity. This is particularly noticeable in relation to the sacrament of Penance. It may even be possible to get agreement from many who receive Penance often that they are in a rut as far as their sins go and as far as confessional graces

are concerned.

In regard to Confession and to the Mass and to other phases of the liturgical life we must say again that the use of the vernacular, thrilling and significant as this departure has turned out to be, will not in itself insure greater fervor.

And we submit that a rather thorough change of heart is in order even as far as regular penitents are concerned. Attitudes in reference to the validity of the sacrament must be enriched and fortified and extended to include attitudes of deeper fervor and deeper purification and steadier advancement in grace.

In sacramental Confession we should not only be concerned with past sins and failures, but with future needs and graces. In the reception of Penance we should regard the experience not only as an effort to obtain valid absolution but as an opportunity to enter into fruitful and comforting companionship with the Lord. It is a matter of experiencing the tenderness of God's mercy and the strength of His compassion for weak man.

We could prepare for Confession in such a way that we are made sharply alert to the prospect of meeting Christ in person and of receiving from Him, through a human priest, the warmth of forgiveness with the peace and joy that go with divine favor and friendship.

In the past too many souls have been unduly concerned with the technicalities of sacramental confession. This may be why, for one thing, there are so many tortured confessions and so many fearful moments in the tribunal of Penance, and an occasional bad confession.

When the whole experience is considered to be a personal and hopeful encounter with the loving Lord who forgave a great sinner on the cross and has continued to forgive the repentant of heart ever since - the terrors of the confessional recede as hope and warmth and growth in grace take their place.

It is possible, for example, to be more deeply steeped in the life of grace after repentance and forgiveness than before the sin was committed. The telling feature of the return to grace and favor lies largely in the depth and fervor of contrition. For in fervent sorrow and sincere determination to better things the groundwork is prepared for richer friendship with Christ.

The social nature of the sacrament is clear from the fact that the penitent's return to grace and favor is a renewal in a real sense of health and glory and hope in the whole Body of Christ. When we sin we damage the Mystical Body. When we make up for sin and receive back into our souls the living and healing presence of God there is added cause for joy in the whole Church - in heaven and on earth.

Sacramental Confession has a social value also in that it

should concern not only our violations of personal virtue and our weaknesses of individual character, but it should concern our past failures and present hopes in regard to social conduct. The neglect of social responsibilities has been a paralyzing weakness in the universal Church and in individual souls. The examination of conscience, for instance, should include our duties as members of the family and of society, our concerns in charity and justice for all men of all races and nations, our call as Christians to build up a system of zeal and apostolic action for the salvation of our neighbors

Anyone who confines his examination of conscience to the table of sins in the typical Catholic prayer book will probably become frustrated in his ambition for spiritual growth and supernatural perfection.

There is not nearly enough attention paid to the public, social, liturgical nature of Penance. In a few scattered places now there are public services with fitting psalms or songs and prayers by the congregation before and after the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance.

Perhaps this type of observation should be encouraged where possible. For the solemn, public observance of rites in connection with the sacrament would help to get that sacramental Confession is some kind of obscure, private, questionable fringe of Catholic life.

All of us should become richly aware that Penance is a dramatic way for the Christ of the cross to show the glory of His mercy to the weak and needy of His people on earth. And that is all of us.

--Rev. Joseph A. Hughes in the Register

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GENERAL CONFESSION FOR SENIORS A general confession is made either out of devotion or because a confession in the past has been sacrilegious. In recommending a general confession to the seniors we are thinking in terms of the confession of devotion. Such a confession is generally made at the turning points of one's life: a novice before making profession of vows of religion, a deacon before ordination to the priesthood, an engaged couple before their wedding. Another of these milestones is graduation.

The sins confessed in a general confession of devotion have already been forgiven, but by bringing them together into one confession the penitent is more likely to get to the root of his failures. He may see sensuality as rooted in laziness; uncharitableness or a critical spirit in pride; sins of speech -- lying, profanity, blasphemy, obscenity -- in a sense of insecurity.

Seniors, plan your general confession soon, but give yourself plenty of time, and give your confessor plenty of time to help you. Don't attempt it during Sunday Mass. The sooner you make your general confession, the richer and the more satisfying will be your final weeks at Notre Dame.

For Freshmen Only .....

MARY IS NOT CHRISTIAN FROTH

Many of our collegians take a very jaundiced view of devotion to Mary. They even rebel against any kind of relationship to the Mother of Christ. There are understandable reasons for this very apparent attitude. Too often their relationship to Mary has been cast in a sentimental framework. At eighteen, Mary is still being given to them in pabulum form. Insight into Mary has not been on a par with their growth and so is very unsatisfying. In fact they can't stomach it.

Is superficial sentiment the basis of our relationship to Mary? Is Mary just one of the frills and extras of the Christian life? Mary is dead-center at the core of Christianity. She is an intimate part of the very stuff of our faith. Commitment to her is not an accident. It is as real as commitment to the Universal Salvific Will of God, the Hypostatic Union, or the Beatific Vision.

Mary is the Mother of Christ. That means she is Mother of the whole Christ -- Head and members. We are the members of Christ. So in a very real sense Mary is our Mother. In the order of nature if a woman gave birth only to the head of a body it would be some kind of monstrosity. In the order of supernature it's no different -- Mary can't be Mother of the Head without being the Mother of the members. God's plan for redemption demands the whole Christ and in order to realize His plan He chose Mary to be the Mother of the total Christ. She can't be divorced from our redemption.

We are Christ 1965 style. Our unavoidable task is to live this. It is a frightening responsibility. And none of us needs a wall to fall on him to realize how he instinctively shrinks from this responsibility, or how inept he feels in the face of the struggle. And if we have anything at all rattling around in our heads we know we need this Mother just as our Head does. In our struggle today we don't have to go to the framework of the historical Christ to find some tenuous relationship to Mary. We have it because we are Christ.

We approach Mary on the solid basis of our irrevocable incorporation in Christ. If we feel we must cast her in cold syllogisms, if we want to refine her into a loveless abstraction, if we want to refuse to give her a human response, fine -- as long as we recognize her indispensable place in God's redemptive plan (which is still in progress). Apparently God wanted His Son, Our Head, to have a different sort of relationship -- a relationship with a warm, human, feminine-type person -- A Mother.

-- Father Baker, C.S.C.