

Dedication in Memory of The Reverend Joseph A. Ormsby, S.J.

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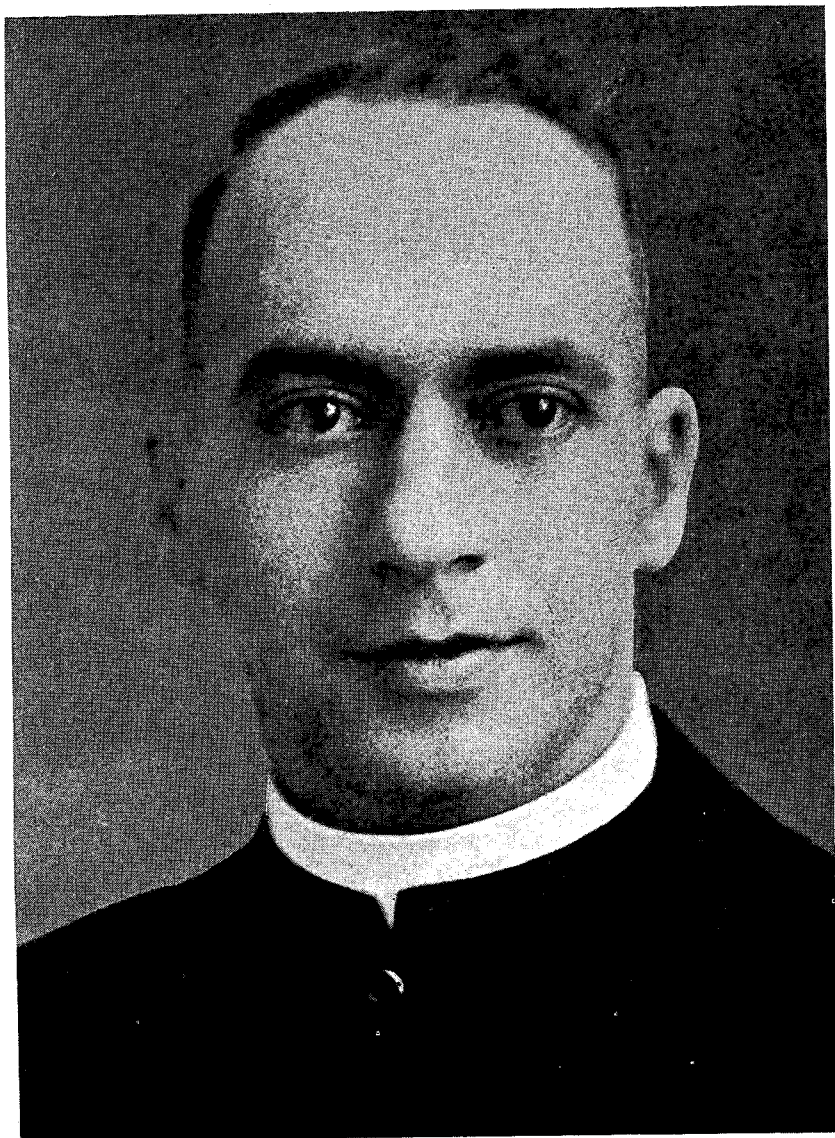


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THE REVEREND JOSEPH A. ORMSBY, S.J.

Dedicated to the Memory

of

The Reverend Joseph A. Ormsby, S.J.

“Men should be taught to know and love and live by two virtues, the virtue of charity and the virtue of justice. The first is, in a large part, the concern of the Church and the clergy. By it, men learn to think God’s thoughts and to take on God’s ways. But the second is the work of the law and lawyers.”

These words were spoken by the beloved Father Ormsby on the occasion of the annual banquet for the Law Review staff. Up until the time of his death on December 6, 1944, Father Ormsby served as Regent of the Law School.

Possibly, it would be an inadequate treatment to epitomize Father Ormsby’s life in these few sentences. Still, were we to attempt to include other characteristics in his personality, we would find them pretty well covered by these two outstanding virtues, namely, charity and justice.

What law student, during his or her days of study, failed to find in Father Ormsby a brilliant scholar, a clear and forceful teacher, a charitable and kind advisor, a true man of God, and an everlasting friend? What graduate of the Law School has failed to think back upon his relations with his former Regent without expressing deep sentiments of gratitude and appreciation that Providence had so favored him with such a sympathetic and understanding teacher and guide? His friends were legion. They belonged to all walks of life from little children, whom he dearly loved, to the old and infirm, whom he sincerely respected. There were lawyers, doctors, business men, nurses, teachers, and former students who came to him for advice in their problems, for consolation in their grief, and counsel in their affairs of their daily life. All who knew him recognized not only his kindly and sympathetic nature, but, likewise, his keen foresight and sound judgment. His was no superficial charity, not worthy of the name, but a charity that sprang from his knowledge, love and service of God. His justice was not of a temporary, pragmatic type but was moulded and patterned after the justice of the Master, Whose call to serve he had heeded.

It is easily understood, then, why Father Ormsby should have reverted again and again to these two outstanding virtues in his dealings with the law students and the Law School graduates. He was deeply interested in them as individuals and sincerely interested in them for the profession they represented. He was concerned lest any student going forth from the Marquette School of Law prove a betrayer of a sacred trust. He was exceedingly anxious that Marquette law graduates, because of their enlightened minds, be true, real men of justice, and that they serve as lamps for a world that sits in darkness and in the shadow of death. His gentle wit and wry humor could easily be reconciled with his charity for who, outside of a truly charitable man,

is entitled to humor and mirth? It was because he understood men and appreciated the pattern of life that he could turn a drab situation into a happier outlook by resorting to quip or incongruity.

Father Ormsby was born in Milwaukee on the 12th of May, 1896. He attended the Gesu parochial school and, later, the old Marquette Academy. Father Ormsby withdrew from college and joined the armed forces when this country entered World War I. He was sent to officers' training school at Fort Sheridan and, later, to Camp Custer. He served as a first lieutenant. When the war was over, he returned to finish his college work for his Bachelor's degree. In September, 1920, he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Florissant. His scholarly abilities were immediately recognized by his superiors, and, because of this, his course was somewhat shortened. He taught English for one year in the college department of St. Louis University and two years at Marquette University High School. He was ordained at St. Louis, Missouri on June 25, 1930. Upon completion of his tertianship, he was assigned to Marquette University where he taught Logic and Ethics in the college department. In 1939, Father Ormsby was appointed Regent of the Law School to succeed the late Father Hugh McMahan. Besides classes in Ethics in the college department, Father Ormsby conducted classes in Jurisprudence in the Law School. On the afternoon of December 6th, while sitting at his desk in the Law School, he was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage and died at St. Joseph's Hospital a few hours later. He was laid to rest in "God's Acre" at Calvary Cemetery surrounded by many of his former teachers and close to the Rev. Hugh McMahan.

Father Ormsby will live in the memory of all who knew and loved him. Law students and Law School graduates could best serve the memory of their former Regent by closely adhering to the principles of the two virtues he ever espoused, the virtues of Charity and Justice.