

Your Vocation.

Perhaps examination time is not the best time for the world for a talk of vocation. If it is not, we apologize. But examination time is a time of reckoning; and those who are weighed and found wanting may well begin to ask themselves, "What are we here for?"

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This is not a talk on the priesthood or the religious life under vows. This is intended for every student at Notre Dame, whether he is a Notre Dame man or not, and Notre Dame is primarily an institution for the training of Catholic laymen. Its purpose is to put before the future Catholic laymen of our country a plain statement of their duty.

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A few days ago a request came from Australia for a few copies of the Religious Survey for a priest who was telling his parishioners all that he knew of the wonderful spirituality of the students at Notre Dame, in far-off America. Three or four such reports and requests come in every week, and they come from the four corners of the globe. A priest came here this summer from Lithuania to verify with his own eyes the things he had read in a magazine of his own country. You have already heard that an article on the religious life of Notre Dame was prepared recently at the request of the Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, which is read by the most influential people, Catholics, all over the world.

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The eyes of the world are upon you. American Catholicity is, humanly speaking, the hope of the Church; we look to educated Catholics for leadership; and Notre Dame, all kidding aside, is commonly regarded as the great Catholic educational center of America.

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Fashion or favor, force or fate, something has brought you to Notre Dame. It matters little why you came. You are here. And from now on the world will measure you by the yardstick it has for Notre Dame men. And right now, during examination week, when a realization of your many infirmities bears in upon you, you can sort yourself out and classify yourself according to what the world expects of you. Classification is possible where there is variety, and there is certainly variety when you have, along with wonderful types of spiritual development,

Men who lie,  
Men who steal,  
Men who cheat,  
Men who befoul the holy air with obscenity and blasphemy,  
Men who dishonor father and mother,  
Men who consort with skilled doves,  
Men who are numb to all that is holy and alive to all that is foul.

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For God! For country! For Notre Dame! For yourself, if you must have a selfish motive, make a man of yourself: a man who can say "NO" to temptation; a man who would starve rather than earn a dishonest penny; a man who would be racked and torn rather than compromise the fair name of Notre Dame; a man who would pluck out his tongue rather than have it utter an unworthy word; a man who would give his body to the flames rather than defile it; a man of courage, a man of Christ!

John F. O'Hara, C.S.C.,