

July 17, 1925.

The Summer School Debacle.

"Mediocre" was the laconic reply of one freshman to the Survey question, "What sort of a religious program do you intend to follow after leaving Notre Dame?" He rolled a world of selfishness into one word. By giving mediocrity as his ambition in life (for spiritual ambition is a man's final ambition) he accused himself of being the dog in the manger; he qualified himself as slave to his appetites; he acknowledged intellectual degeneracy and moral unfitness. Notre Dame is not for the likes of him; he knows it, and he stays on -- because his sloth makes him not enough of a bad man to get canned.

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This question arises, why is it that during the Summer School only thirty per cent of the men students on the campus are at Holy Communion each morning, while during the year fifty-five per cent approach daily? Some of the reasons are given in the pamphlet on Perseverance; these apply, however, only to those who have shown the divine spark of spiritual ambition at one time or another. There is another class not considered in this pamphlet, and this class is more numerous in proportion than during the school year, for the same cases that make them spiritually stupid operated also to bring them back to Summer School.

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These are the Limbo Catholics. They do not want to go to hell-- they hate pain, and they can't see any reason for it. Of course they don't want to go to hell; they yell like comanches for a priest if they stub a toe. And they don't want to go to heaven. That is very clear from the fact that they don't want to know God and love Him on earth -- which is the only way we can gain heaven.

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They think Notre Dame is a filling station. Small-town tanks, they come on to Notre Dame to demonstrate their capacity. They do their stuff constantly -- largely by word of mouth -- and shout the length of the corridor (their big world) the time they got in this morning and how pie-eyed they were. Roll a hundred of them together and you wouldn't have a 4.4 bad man;-- but you would have the nucleus of a good Ku Klux parade. They have to move in droves; they can operate only in large numbers.

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Silent contempt they mistake for applause; goofing they interpret as popularity. When Notre Dame tolerates their presence because of their simplicity, they brag of cleverness in putting it over. The Big Tough He-Men go on sniffing corks and courting dish washers -- and digging their two-by-four graves. That's an exaggeration! When a real city slicker gets through with them you could put two dozen of them in a two-by-four hole in the ground, and still have room left to wrap their carcasses in an American flag.

Accommodations for Waiters.

After the morning work and before breakfast, student waiters still have time to come to the basement chapel for Holy Communion.

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