

Eligibility for canonization is no necessary requirement for an authentic vocation.	University of Notre Dame Religious Bulletin February 12, 1952	Prayers requested for deceased father of Ed Joyce, '49. 13 special intentions.
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"It Is Hard For Thee To Kick Against The Goad."

After Saul fell from his horse along the road to Damascus where he was hustling to bring back the Christians in chains, Our Lord spoke abruptly, asked why this persecution. "Who art thou, Lord?" answered the blinded Saul. "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest. . . It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

A call to the priesthood is seldom given as it was to Saul. There are unusual circumstances, though, occasional graces, in which the urge for the religious life and the priesthood has been born. The loss of a mother, father or close friend, a stirring sermon on death and judgment, a close call with sudden death--such circumstances, which we call "occasional graces", are extraordinary, not ordinary ways from which a vocation develops. All-of-sudden vocation impulses need testing out.

Ordinarily the desire to become a religious or a priest is the fruit of a good Catholic life--an honest, sincere effort to do God's will each day as each day comes along. The qualifications may be put simply enough: the desire to serve God and work for the salvation of souls; the necessary mental, moral and physical fitness; finally, acceptance by an ecclesiastical superior.

The choice made is not between a life of sin and a life of virtue; not between losing your soul and saving it; not between Satan and God. You don't have to hate women and children and family life. You don't have to hate anything that is good. All goodness comes from God. The choice you will make is between something good and something better. The fact that you may experience a strong attraction for family life does not in itself nullify an authentic vocational grace. If it proves anything, it only proves you are a normal human being.

Our Lord could be saying to you what He said to the rich young man who had kept all the commandments from his youth: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come follow Me."

The notion of sacrifice understood in regard to a religious vocation means giving up something good for something better--for God: The right to possess and to use what you possess, by the vow of poverty; the right to marry, by the vow of chastity; the right to do your own will, by the vow of obedience. For this exchange, a hundredfold in this life, eternal life hereafter.

Looking Before Or After.

Admit that the sacrifices entailed in "renouncing everything" are real. Why over-emphasize what you will give up? De-emphasize this, and emphasize what you will acquire, what you gain. A young lady leaves her family to marry. But what young couple planning marriage dwell upon what or whom they leave. They are by far more concerned about what they will gain as husband and wife, as mother and father.

900 Out Of 1200.

A circular advertizing the pamphlet "What Shall I Be" states that the results of a survey conducted in a large Midwestern diocese to find out what Catholic young men and women thought about religious vocations was startling. Over 900 Catholic youth--out of 1200 questioned--admitted having thought at times of becoming priests, brothers or sisters. . . Results from religious surveys of Notre Dame students showed approximately the same percentage. Reasons given for refusing to consider taking further steps varied from "I found a good girl" to "I'm not good enough." If either Saul or Augustine had refused God's call because he wasn't "good enough" the Church would not now be praying to Paul and Augustine as canonized saints and bishops.