

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
April 21, 1958

"Like A Thief In The Night..."

That's how Death came for Tom Sullivan of Alumni Hall, last Friday night, as he and two companions were returning to the campus from Lake Michigan.

Suddenly and swiftly their car slipped off the edge of the road, skidded, and rolled over and over, pinning him under the wreckage. Although all three were seriously injured, yet it was only Tom whom the Angel of Death tabbed for Eternity. He lived about an hour, was conscious, and enjoyed the consolations of the Last Sacraments as they were administered at the Niles hospital by the parish priest. By the grace of God -- and perhaps by virtue of the First Friday Devotion that was a part of his life -- he was prepared to go up before the Judgment Seat of God.

That's the story of one Senior's death.

A Different Cross

For Rodger Kenney, another Senior, death climaxed a long, lingering illness. He came to Notre Dame a healthy youngster in 1953. In 1956 the first symptoms of leukemia caused him to drop out of school for a year. He returned last September for his final year. Dr. Sherman Egan took Rodger into his own home, the better to watch over him; and Rodger received the loving attention of the entire Egan family. Rodger continued to go to classes until March 29. Then on Good Friday he became seriously ill. Death came at noon on Easter Sunday, and found him prepared and ready.

The Lesson

Thus we are reminded once more that death is a fact beyond controversy; that it may come at anytime; that it is no respecter of age -- for men die at all ages.

As students, you are wont to think of death as an event shrouded in the distant future. These are the years you invest in studies geared to bring success in time to come. Your mind, and plans, and hopes are intent upon a future of action in the busy market place. And yet, even into your ears here at Notre Dame comes the story of Death.

It is only natural for you to plan and to dream of the years ahead -- of your life beyond graduation -- because Notre Dame is a preparation for life, a useful life in an active world. Commencement Day, you are told, is so named because it opens the door to opportunity and a career in the future.

But oh, how deceitful can be the view that school is only a preparation for life -- when it may be the only life you will ever know in this world!

For Tom Sullivan and Rodger Kenney Notre Dame was just that -- the only life they ever knew in this world. It was the climax of their earthly existence. Wise is the man who makes each day, here and now, a preparation for his eternity!

Hear Dr. Dooley Tonight at 8:00

One of the really great Notre Dame men of our day is coming back to the campus tonight. He will speak in the Drill hall, giving you a bristling account of his exciting experiences in Laos (Indo-China). Many of you have read his book. He's even better when he speaks, as you'll discover tonight.

Tomorrow afternoon at 5:10 -- Mass for Rodger Kenney and Tom Sullivan in Sacred Heart

Church requested by the Senior Class.