
Help Van Make His Novena

We'll let Van Wallace speak for himself first, and then tell the freshmen who he is:

"272 Cass Avenue, Mt. Clemens, Mich.

"Dear Father O'Hara: I'm back again, temporarily, at the same place where I spent the first year after my accident. We are looking for an apartment in Mount Clemens; so, until we can find one that doesn't present too many problems to my ambulance cot, we will be here, at the old home built by my great-grandfather.

"The change from the lake to here is as great, in a way, as the one from the Detroit apartment to the shore was, this summer. Instead of lying on a big, screened porch, watching a scene that's mostly blue water and cedars, gulls and kingfishers hovering and plunging for minnows, with an occasional group of wild ducks flying over, I'm on an old-fashioned side-porch, watching the chestnut leaves turn to brown and the nuts fall, checking-up on the small-town life as it passes the door, children going to and from school, mamas going shopping and returning with bundles tied on all over, high school kids in wrecky Fords, and, over head, squadrons of battle-planes going through daily maneuvers. I'm getting enough variety this year, surely.

"Next Wednesday, I start making daily trips to Detroit to the Little Flower Shrine, where the annual Novena is to be held. I'll receive Holy Communion here in the morning, and then Dad will drive me to the services in the city.

"This year I am making my novena a joint one, to Mother Duchesne, whose cause for beatification has been introduced, as well as to St. Therese. A former St. Mary's girl who is now a Madame of the Sacred Heart has received a great many favors from Mother Duchesne, and I feel confident that the good Mother will help me. I am going to seek her favor, anyway.

"The boys have always given me such an assurance of continued prayers in my behalf that I'd like to ask them to join me in this Novena. I am getting this request in a little late, but the prayer leaflets didn't reach me until today. I am enclosing copies and asking your help, on the hunch that if I pester enough I'll find some intercessor to help me. -- Recall me to all my friends on the campus. My mother and father send their best. -- Van."

The following prayer, enclosed with the letter, may be used for the Novena: "O God, our refuge and our strength, Who art Thyself the Author of Mercy, hearken to our prayers and grant that what we ask for with confidence we may efficaciously obtain and by this increase the glory of Thy servant, Venerable Philippine Duchesne."

Van is our special case. Six years ago now he enrolled as a freshman here, and spent a very happy year in Carroll Hall (and in the basement chapel and at the Grotto.) On the Fourth of July the following summer he broke his neck while making a shallow dive, and from that day till this he has been paralysed. No doctor who has even examined him will admit that he has any chance to live, but he still lives; no doctor who has treated him will admit that he has helped him, yet he has improved by imperceptible degrees. Several times he has knocked on death's door, when complications developed, but it has refused to open, and such things as gangrenous bed sores have dried up.

Five years in bed, Van hasn't griped yet. His cheerfulness is a wonderful lesson that we need, and it is the best guarantee that his request for prayers will be heeded.

Prayers: James P. Fogarty, '01, of Philadelphia, died yesterday. Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris, who visited Notre Dame three years ago, is dead. Five special intentions.