

Mass for Varnum Parish,  
7:20, Dillon; request of  
a friend.

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
October 24, 1935

Mass, 6:25, Scrin chapel  
for Joe Ratigan's father;  
request of New Jersey Club

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This Matter of Vocation.

A fellow wants advice. He says to you: "I'm not overly pious, never heard a whisper in my ear, never had any mysterious urge of any kind. The kids in grade school and high school, and even the fellows here at the University, have never told me I look like a vocation. No priest ever hinted it to me. Should I chuck all idea of it?"

If you are a good advisor you will caution: "Not too fast with your chucking. You have the thing on the wrong basis. People generally have fluky ideas about what is a vocation. Girl-shyness, gentleness in manner and speech, scrupulous devotion to regular study, and instinctive piety that often lures a boy to church services and devotions--these are not the essential signs of vocation. They might be present in a naturally good but backward boy who had no vocation at all."

Once a tall, straight Man tramped ceaselessly through the cities and country places of Galilee and Judea. He was handsome to look at. His abundant hair fell in rambling curls upon His shoulders. His pitying eyes struck love into the heart of everyone who really looked into them. His voice was soft and kind, but strong. He preached a doctrine of justice and charity, of purity, sincerity and truth. He lived perfectly what He preached.

He came upon earth to change the world through the establishment of a church. His was not the softest way of living. He made bitter enemies and heroic friends. His followers would have to be men of sacrifice, because in the fertility of their sacrifices His doctrines would be born in men's hearts. He died on the cross to give the energy and to show the way.

That Man and His work have struck new love and new purpose in the hearts of sinners like Magdalen and Paul and Augustine. His "business" has attracted sinless saints. What, then, are the inevitable signs of "the call?"

It is the urge or inclination to give your life entirely as priest or brother, to cut yourself off from the pursuit of riches and the realization of worldly ambition, to forego the joys of the home you would establish, to help Him propagate His way of life upon earth. Would you like to work in parish, or classroom, or pulpit, or in an editorial room, aiding men to be better Christians? If you would, you have the first step in a vocation, the desire.

But you must have capabilities, too: health, head, and some degree of holiness. Your confessor can tell you whether you are "good" or holy enough. Leave that part of it up to him. And any priest who has known you long can settle your doubts regarding health and head.

Never mind about "voices" or what people generally think about you. If you merely have the desire, go to some priest's room and talk the matter over confidentially. You will probably feel like putting the thing off. But go anyway today or tomorrow. The priest you see will not try to rope you in. There are plenty of vocations. It is probably far more important to you than it is to the welfare of the Church or of any religious community that you get straight on the matter of your vocation.

And pray to know what God wants you to be. At the elevation of Our Lord's body during Mass, you might habitually say: "My Lord and my God, I offer up to You all my responsibilities. Help me up to that ideal which You had in Your mind when You created me."

PRAYER3: (deceased) Bob McAuliffe's brother; Sister Mary St. Martin, B.V.M.; mother of Oliver Schell ('29); grandmother of Joe Louis. Ill, Joe Manix; Father Nieuwland; Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald; grandmother of Jack and Dick Baker. 8 special intentions. Deceased, 3rd anniversary of father of David Flynn.