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Goodbye, Boys. God Bless You.

The typewriter is a bit rusty from disuse, and perhaps the fingers move more slowly than they once did, but the heart begs the Prefect of Religion for a chance to do one more Bulletin before the separation.

Shall it be done in retrospect? The mind wanders back easily, especially in the familiar surroundings of the Sorin Hall tower, with chains and medals all around, with the old San Xavier picture on the wall, and the blessing of Pope Pius XI, and in the drawer on the left the purple stole that is stained with the chrism of ordination and the tears of penitents. Yes, the mind can picture a line of penitents at the door, waiting to tell a story whether of ten years or ten hours -- that will turn a soul from death to life, that will empower a boy once more to smile from his heart.

Yes, retrospect is easy -- especially when in three decades of work with Notre Dame men you can't recall one who was really evil. Retrospect is pleasant when you know that thousands of penitents have gone out with resolutions strong enough to withstand temptations, when you know that daily Communion has turned good intentions into good deeds, has made weak infants into strong men, and strong men into saints of God. Retrospect is inspiring when the priest, poor, weak mortal like anyone of you, learns daily lessons in humility from the great-hearted men who kneel to him who takes God's place in their lives.

But retrospect, while pleasant to nodding old men, is useful to your spiritual growth only so far as it gives you pitfalls to avoid and good example to emulate.

Your problem is of the present and of the future. It is yours to say whether Notre Dame shall be for your brother and your children and for your children's children, the Shrine of Our Blessed Lady, the haven of peace it has been to you.

The one thing that can insure your happiness, the one thing that can keep Notre Dame a holy place of goodness and clean fun, is the supernatural spirit of sacrifice. You will find happiness only in what you do for others -- for God, or for your neighbor. Even the personal quest of salvation, to which you are obliged by justice and charity, gives the greatest happiness when you forget yourself in the love of God.

Daily Communion is the Food of Sacrifice -- never let its tradition weaken or fade. Daily Mass is the sacred core of Sacrifice. Daily visits to Mary, the Mother of God -- at the Grotto, telling your beads, in a goodnight smile to the Lady of the Dome-- these means of grace keep you close to God.

To the students of today and tomorrow I entrust Notre Dame.

Goodbye, boys. God bless you.

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Ex-Prefect of Religion