

All students from	University of Notre Dame	name and addresses (local
Detroit and environs are	Religious Bulletin	and home) with one of the
requested to leave their	May 19, 1944	chaplains. . .

Missing In Action.

"Dear Rev. Father: After it was all over, I learned that Lieut. Raymond Shea was a graduate of Notre Dame of the class of '35. So often people in the States hear the glories of pilots and copilots, bombardiers and navigators. Lieut. Shea was none of these; only a member of the ground forces, the intelligence officer for his post.

"Just as I walked down the little corridor leading to our coffeeroom, I spotted a stranger to our base and spoke to him: 'Lieut. Shea, what in the world are you doing over here at this early hour?' I spoke thus to him for this Officer was one of the faithful ones of the Fighter Group attending Mass at . . . 'Do you want to go back with me in order to attend Mass?' I knew if he were free, he would be there for the Mass and if he were there for the Mass, he would receive Holy Communion, too. Ever since I took over this Fighter Group, Lieut. Shea seldom if ever missed a weekday Mass, and when he came, he invariably received Holy Communion kneeling beside another officer, Captain Finn. Lieut. Shea replied: 'Father, I'm going out on this mission with the men. I want to see what it's like.'

(Two ships were lost on that mission) "Usually when I hear of ships going down, I ask: 'Who were the men on the ships?' This time I forced out this question slowly and softly: 'Was Lieut. Shea in one of the ships?' I asked the right question, for the answer came: 'Yes, Father.'

"Late that evening the two enlisted men, who were able to bail out, returned to the base. Naturally they were rushed for we all wanted to know what happened. The two ships, Jimmie's and Bill's, had cleared the overcast and were well out in the clear and had been for a short time, when it happened. Just why Jimmie's rammed Bill's ship will never be known. Travelling through that thick, icy overcast may have damaged the instruments on Jimmie's ship. Anyway he got too close to the ship just ahead and a little to the right. The props of his ship ground into the left fin of the tail and his wing damaged the upright fin. As soon as this happened, down went Jimmie's ship; no one had a chance to get out. For the moment Bill's ship was safe even though it had a damaged tail. Those in the rear kept the pilot informed by radio how that injured tail was standing the strain. For a while everything seemed all right, was all right. Since they were close to the channel, Bill decided to fly over it, salvo his bombs and then return to land and have his men bail out. He gave orders that all should get into their parachutes and stand by.

"He guided his ship out over the channel, salvoed his bombs and then began his turn for the coast. Just as he did, the tail snapped off and down went the ship with a sudden lurch. That dive was so sudden that only one man was able to jump from the ship and he parachuted down into the channel, some 5000 feet below. The other one who got out - he claims it was only the grace of God that pushed him out of the ship for as the ship dived down he was pinned between the waist gun and the side of the ship; was tossed back and forth and around and then all of a sudden tossed through an open door, some 1000 feet above the channel. On their way down these two could see their ship, with Bill and Lieut. Shea and the engineer nosedive into the channel.

"I was asked to return Lieut. Shea's notebook to his base. In it I found this prayer, (quoted in part)

Dear God in heaven up above,  
Look down upon the one I love,  
Tell her, Lord, she should not fear,  
Though far away, through prayer, I'm near.

"Lieut. Shea had a reason for carrying that little clipping in his notebook. At home in the States, there was not only his loved one but loved ones -- his wife and his unborn babe."

(Chaplain Guy Moews, ChOC)