

Prayers: wife of
Eddie Mahon of Chem.
Dept. - operation.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
November 13, 1944

Servicemen: Communion
is distributed in Dillon
after 5 P.M. Mass till 6:10.

He died In The Lord.

A tragedy took place during the short vacation between semesters, a tragedy in which a Notre Dame student lost his life. Seaman Tom Draper, a member of Co. D of the V-12 unit, living in Dillon Hall, was drowned in the Ohio river. To add to the tragedy, and to the already heavy sorrow of Tom's mother, the body has not been recovered yet.

Tom's home was in Los Angeles. His leave did not give him enough travelling time to go home, so he accepted seaman Bill Brockoff's invitation to spend the vacation at Bill's home in Cincinnati. The two went on a canoe trip. On the return home the craft capsized near midstream. Neither men were frightened by the mishap. Swimming for shore seemed to be out of the question, because of adverse currents. So Bill and Tom headed for two concrete blocks making up part of the dam near which the accident took place. Bill Brockoff reached one of the blocks first. While resting, Bill kept his eye on Tom who was only a few feet away from the second concrete block. Then he climbed up the ladder attached to the block. On reaching the top, he turned to look for his companion, and Tom was nowhere to be seen. The Coast Guards Rescue crews came to the scene, but all their efforts failed.

Tom Draper was well prepared for this day. Even though it was vacation time, and he was living away from home, Tom assisted at Mass and received Holy Communion daily in the parish church. He was at Mass and Communion only a few hours before God called him. Our Blessed Savior seemed to have been a very important part of his vacation. There happened to be Forty Hours devotions in Cincinnati and Tom not only attended, but he served on the altar.

Tom's life is an example of prayer for every student, especially the servicemen. A tight schedule of classes and Navy routine did not hamper his devotions. Daily Mass and Communion headed Tom's list of spiritual activities. A favorite devotion was the Rosary. He possessed a rosary book. It was a common sight to see him in Dillon Hall chapel with the book in one hand and the rosary in the other. The beads were in his pocket the day he died, and an extra pair was found among his effects.

Tom had just completed his first semester at Notre Dame. His class average was very close to 90. One of his teachers observed that he often placed J.M.J. (Jesus, Mary, Joseph) at the top of his class assignments. A small thing, yet it shows where his thoughts were.

This exemplary life of prayer did not start at Notre Dame. The habit was part of Tom before he came to Our Lady's campus. That means he was keeping close to God in prayer during his three months of boot camp, the one month of radar school, the three months on the supply ship U.S.S. Argonne, and the ten months on the island of New Caledonia.

Tom was only nineteen. But it was not a boy that God took home to heaven; it was a real man.

The intention for the first Mission Mass in Sacred Heart Church at 6:45 Wednesday morning will be for the repose of Tom's soul. A requiem Mass will be offered Wednesday morning at 6:15 in Dillon Hall chapel at the request of the servicemen, who will rise early to be present at the Holy Sacrifice.

FATHER MALOUGHNEY, C.S.C., THE MISSION SPEAKER, WILL BE IN HIS CONFESSIONAL BY THE SACRISTY FOR CONFESSION AND CONSULTATION, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FROM 4 to 5 IN THE AFTERNOON.