

Emergency operation:
Geo. De Bruins (Farley),
appendectomy.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
September 24, 1947

(111) Sister Eiegius, CSCJ
Pray also for 5 Spec.Ints
including Mission skivers

Van Wallace at Lourdes

For the freshmen who do not know Van, here is a very brief history of his case. In the summer of 1924, after his sophomore year at Notre Dame, Van was out swimming. Attempting to dive in shallow water he jerked his head back suddenly and broke two vertebrae in his neck. His body was immediately paralyzed, although he remained perfectly conscious. The doctors gave no hope for his recovery. But he hung on to life tenaciously. For twenty-three years he had remained in a paralyzed state. He travels about on an ambulatory cot.

Van is now at the great shrine of Our Lady at Lourdes in France. Bill Olivier, a former student, is driving Van through Europe in a new car, the gift of the Notre Dame Club of Detroit. A newsy letter from Bill will interest you.

"I cannot begin to tell you what we have gone through since we got off the boat. Events have happened so fast and furiously that, as usual we are on the jump. I'll give you a brief idea of our trip since we left Le Havre.

"We are five in the car, including Van, and it is crowded, but we are managing all right. Tante (Bill's aunt, who is guide and interpreter) brought bread, butter and a sharp knife from Belgium, along with her coffee beans. What a blessing! The tea in France is good; coffee is only barley; and milk is extinct.

"From Le Havre we went directly to Paris. We left Paris September 9, and started for Lourdes. Tuesday night we stayed in Tours; Wednesday in Angoulene and Thursday in Dax. We arrived at Lourdes about 1:30 P.M. Friday. We decided to start the novena Sunday in order to get a little rest and to get settled. It's a good thing we did; here is what happened.

"We participated in the procession of the Blessed Sacrament at 3:30 P.M. Friday; visited the grotto; had supper and went to bed. By that time it was midnight. Each diocese is assigned a particular time for a pilgrimage. Right now people from Lisieux diocese are here, along with a large group from Belgium. This morning, Saturday, after breakfast Van was examined by French doctors of the Lourdes Medical Bureau, including a Belgian doctor who is here making the pilgrimage with his people. They took x-rays of him and photographer took pictures of his hands. We gave the bureau the history written by Dr. Kane.

"Van will be permitted to be dipped into the miraculous waters once a day, every day of his novena. Tomorrow our prayers begin in earnest. Let us hope God's will is our desire.

"The sick and infirm are here in countless numbers. The town is overflowing with people and hotel reservations are impossible to obtain. There are some pitiful sights to see. At the end of the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, all the sick are blessed. You cannot imagine all the misery one sees in Lourdes; one woman coughing up blood; a child next to an idiot mentally, who does nothing but sleep; a young girl doubled up from deformity, cripples, infirm persons--everything imaginable. The effect of the religious ceremonies are so stirring that the tears flow freely.....".

The novena for the Sick in honor of the Little Flower begins today. Include Van Wallace among your intentions. Make a visit to Sorin or Morrissey Hall daily, where there are relics of St. Therese, and attend Mass and receive Communion during these nine days of the novena.