

Solemn High Mass this morn-
ing, 11:10. Military funeral.
Assemble outside main church
after Mass.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
February 24, 1950

Solemn High Mass Saturday
morning, 6:30, main church,
by K-C's. All K-C's be
there and receive for Ray.

"He Began The Day With God."

"Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit....O Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spir-
it....Holy Mary, pray for me....O Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy, do thou
protect me from the enemy, and receive me at the hour of death....Come to his assis-
tance, ye Saints of God, come forth to meet him, ye Angels of the Lord: Receiving his
soul: offering it in the sight of the Most High....May Christ receive thee, Who hath
called thee, and may the Angels bear thee into Abraham's Bosom"

With two Holy Cross priests, one Holy Cross Brother, his mother, father, devoted bro-
ther Pierre, two Holy Cross Sisters, Jerry Ransberger and his wife, about his bed Ray
Espenan lay on his bed of death and breathed forth his soul to God.

Injured fatally with a broken neck, Ray was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital immediately.
His pal and best friend, Jerry, was with him from the time of the accident until his
death. After x-rays had proven that there was scarcely any hope for his recovery, he
was anointed, fully conscious of what was going on, and shortly afterwards received
Holy Viaticum.

But Ray had begun that tragic day with God in Holy Communion. Monday morning in Dil-
lon Hall he received devoutly his God. Now he understands how Christ, the glorified
Christ, is sacramentally present in the Eucharist. No longer does he have to believe
because his faith has made him whole. No longer does he have to hope because he now
possesses. Only charity, the love of God he carried in his heart, now endureth for-
ever.

How glorious the Mother of God must be! What a beatific thrill was Ray's when he saw
Mary for the first time--this beautiful Queen of Heaven, this Mother of God, now his
mother in eternity. Indeed Ray need not be mourned. We who are left behind with our
destiny unsealed are the ones to be sad. No man could have died a better prepared
death. Notre Dame man that he was he saw death coming, walking with certain strides
toward him; yet he met death with a smile, prayerfully, confidently, unafraid.

You know a good man when you see one, and Ray was every inch a man, as good a Notre
Dame man as ever walked this campus. A serious, hard-working student, a loyal friend,
a gentleman on the football field, in the classroom, as on the campus. A true Catholic,
one who practiced his religion with manly devotion. A smiling personality, extraordi-
narily devoted to his mother and father, two sisters and two brothers. Not for a single
moment did he cause them worry or concern.

Ray served his country in the armed forces for two years as a Navy signal corpsman.
When he enrolled at Notre Dame, a life-long ambition was fulfilled. And so Notre
Dame, the school he loved with heartfelt devotion, must bid him sad farewell.

Completely paralyzed, no feeling or movement in arms, legs or lower body, Ray's heart
beat strongly but in vain till it wearied of the struggle and could carry its burden
no longer. Often his lips moved in prayer. When the Prefect of Religion told him
his football teammates were going to turn out and all for him at Mass, he
smiled faintly, "Tell them, thanks, Father." He even volunteered to offering the
terrific pain in his shoulders, neck and head for those who were not receiving the
sacraments as they should. When Father H. Church whispered: "Ray, you may die anytime
now," he smiled and shook his head in a knowing, yea. He said his act of complete resign-
ation to God and whatever He willed. Then all knelt and prayed the rosary,
after which he lapsed into a coma, dying four hours later.

To his beloved mother and father, brothers and sisters Notre Dame bids them have
faith. Death is not the end....but the beginning of eternal life with God.