

tomorrow: regular Thurs-
day Holy Hour for vocation-
al guidance, 4:30--5:30....

University of Notre Dame
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...Bring your vocational
troubles to Christ in the
Blessed Sacrament and PRAY.

"Give Us Some Deep Spirituality!"

The Holy Father in official and unofficial admonitions has constantly stressed the need today for personal sanctification. The fundamental means to be used in striving for this goal, which he emphasizes, are prayer and penance.

Our age, which inordinantly pursues pleasure and ease and comfort, resents being told self-denial is the necessary ascetical device for full discipleship with Christ, Who said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Convert Thomas Merton....

....Now Father M. Louis, Trappist, discusses SELF-DENIAL AND THE CHRISTIAN in an article written for The Commonwealth (March 31, 1950). The sub-title reads: "A life without asceticism is a life of illusion, unreality, and unhappiness."

After a brief introduction, very pointedly Father Louis says: "If we are to realize our destinies, to make ourselves what we are intended to be, and find happiness both in this life and in the next, our chief concern should be to develop the life of grace in our souls. In order to do so we have to check and control all those impulses so that other 'law in our members' which, as a matter of unpleasant practical fact, conflicts with the life of grace...."

"No one can really embrace the Christian program of asceticism mapped out in the New Testament, unless he has some idea of the positive, constructive function of self-denial. The Holy Spirit never asks us to renounce anything without offering us something much higher and much more perfect in return....The function of self-denial is to lead us to a positive increase of spiritual energy and life."

Self-Denial Keeps The Soul Spiritually Vigorous.

Father Louis continues: "True sanctity does not consist in trying to live without creatures. It consists in using creatures in order to do the will of God. It consists in using God's creation in such a way that everything that we touch and see and use and desire gives new glory to God."

".....But God cannot be glorified by anything that violates the order established by His wisdom. This order demands that man's body, and all that his body uses, be in subjection to his soul, and that man's soul be subject to God. Now this order is absolutely impossible, in our present state, without the generous and even severe practice of mortification....The soul that is outside the orbit of God's grace is not normally governed by reason but by passion."

"...We cannot use created things for the glory of God unless we are in control of ourselves. We cannot be in control of ourselves if we are under the power of the desires and appetites and passions of the flesh. We cannot give ourselves to God if we do not belong to ourselves. We do not belong to ourselves if we belong to creatures."

"...The real function of asceticism is, then, to liberate us from desires that debase and enslave our souls made for union with God in pure love....The real purpose of self-denial is to turn over the faculties of our soul and body to the Holy Spirit in order that He may work in us the work of transformation which is His masterpiece, and which puts all the rest of creation to shame...."

Those who are unhappily addicted to habits of sensuality--intemperance or impurity--must be convinced that self-indulgence in any form will not be uprooted without rigorously practicing self-denial in conjunction with habits of prayer and the devout reception of the sacraments.