

Seriously ill, father of  
Art Hallagan, '51. 6 Sp. Int.  
(Voc. Holy Hour 4:30 Thurs.)

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
April 25, 1951

Kindly turn in questionnaires  
without delay. . . 193 are in  
already. Keep 'em coming.

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Advice From A Killer.

June 24 last, Notre Dame pilgrimages stood pigeon-toed tired in the vast piazza in front of St. Peter's Basilica. The occasion. . . the canonization of Blessed Maria Goretti, the modern St. Agnes. In unison, 250 thousand excited throats cheered the Holy Father when he appeared carried aloft in saintly dignity. The actual ceremonies of canonization were brief. As Maria was officially and infallibly proclaimed a saint, 250 thousand of us again shook down the thunder from the skies.

Alessandro Serenelli, the killer of Maria Goretti, was not present. His case history however, every prayerful mind recalled. In 1902 Alessandro infuriated because 11-year-old Maria would not submit to his impure passes stabbed her fourteen times. Convicted and sentenced to prison for murder, the fateful killer for twenty-seven years languished in repentance and atonement for his crime.

Since 1929 Alessandro has filled up his empty hours in the obscurity of a Capuchin monastery, working as a hired man and gardener. Truly repentant he accepts as part of his penance to be known as "The Killer of a Saint."

Redemptorist magazine PERPETUAL HELP points out in a featured article that Serenelli finds comfort in the hope his sad story will be a lesson to young teen-agers. Fifty years ago, when he was in his own late teens, he idled his time in reading salacious novels. Having given up his prayers, he hoarded suggestive pin-ups in his room and did not avoid the girl who had become for him an occasion of secret sinful desire. Passions inflamed by literature that belonged in the piggery in his backyard, Alessandro committed murder, with intent to rape. . .

Today he knows that occasions of sin are more lurid and exotic than they were at the turn of the century. . . What with class C movies, burlesques, best sellers, billboards and magazine illustrations! These can be even surer pit-falls for the young than anything in rural Italy in 1900. It was with these thoughts in mind that he penned and signed in his aged shaky hand. . . this message:

I beg pardon of the world for the outrage I committed against the martyr, Maria Goretti, and holy purity. I exhort all to avoid immoral spectacles and all dangerous occasions that can lead to sin. (--Alessandro Serenelli.)

Give Your Eyes And Your Knees A Break.

It will probably take another generation to teach people not to bow their heads at the Elevation of the Sacred Species during the Mass. Pope Pius X, who will be beatified in Rome June 3, tried to correct this mistaken practice when he granted an indulgence for looking at the Sacred Host when it was elevated, and saying, "My Lord and My God!"

Another pointer on correct chapel manners. Respect for the Real Presence calls for a genuflection when you enter the chapel and another when you leave. Some are beginning to enter the pews and leave without even hinting they know what is proper protocol.

Giving Up In Disgust.

In the Bulletin and from the altar rail announcements have been made about the downright careless habit of "THE MEN OF EXTINCTION" who either come late for Sunday Mass or extinguish their devotion like candles after Mass and leave during Communion. No one else seems interested in correcting this abuse; we're disinclined to impose disciplinary regulations or post guards of honor. . . So we're giving up in disgust. We have enough to do without whistling for the cops to strong-arm the miscreant.

Prayers: (deceased) father of John Lattner (Za); brother of Bro. Owen, C.S.C.; grandmothers of Roger Vorce and Jack Janowski; brother of Jack Duffy, '50; 2 deceased persons.