

Prayers: (deceased) Sport University of Notre Dame . . Russell Toohey (Fa); Don
McGrath; uncle of Father Religious Bulletin Burkhart (he needs more
Grimm. Ill, father of . . . October 10, 1951 prayers).

When Did You Last Think Of Becoming A Priest?

After reading Bishop White's (Spokane, Washington) episcopal letter explaining why there is a shortage of priests, brothers and sisters, the thought comes to mind that more should be said in the Bulletin about vocations.

Bishop White pointed out that there is no shortage of vocations; that is, no shortage of "calls" by Our Lord to enter the religious life or the priesthood. What is lacking, he says, are "responses" to the call.

What is true of his diocese is true of many other diocese, is true of Notre Dame. There are sufficient numbers of youths who possess the necessary fitness (mental, moral and physical) to qualify them as aspirants to the priesthood or the religious state. Seeing is believing on this score.

The Conflict.

If there is an unlimited number of candidates for a vocation, why is it that more do not respond? Is it because they fear the sacrifices involved? It is true that to give oneself body and soul to Christ implies a renunciation of worldly possessions by the vow of poverty, a renunciation of the flesh by the vow of chastity, a renunciation of one's will by the vow of obedience. This means sacrifice, and to make the sacrifice a strong motive must prevail.

The conflict involved is the choice, "Should I or shouldn't I?" is fundamentally a conflict of motives. Not until we are faced with such a decision do we realize how powerful is the attractiveness of the world.

Too often in our Catholic life God is accepted and loved, even with deep emotion and great piety, but the cross is soft-pedalled. In an era of prosperity it is difficult to stress the need for the cross. How many of us who go along gayly through life exuding sweetness and affability until a trial reveals our true nature. While there is a showy form of religion, at times with much gusto, there is a dangerous antipathy to the real hard core of Christianity, the crucifixion of the flesh.

The Pauline injunction bids us "to fill up in our body the sufferings wanting to the Passion of Christ." But scourging, crowning with thorns, and crucifixion are not popular.

See how much mortification of the flesh accompanies daily Communion, daily Mass, daily adoration, daily visits to the Grotto, daily acts of kindness to others, and you have an accurate indication of the real depth of religious character.

See how much mortification of the spirit (obedience, full acceptance of Church regulations, humility) accompanies religious fervor, and you have the final test. God and Mammon cannot be reconciled. And Mammon sings a mighty sweet tune whenever a boy or girl starts taking serious Christ's call, "Come, follow me."

Resolve The Conflicts.

Increase your love of God. No one finds it repulsive to make sacrifices for someone he loves deeply. To give is precisely what love impels. . . Seek advice from your rector, prefect, confessor, or chaplain. . . Meanwhile watch and pray. Sometimes indignation is aroused by the suggestion that if you want to solve your problems you should pray. Prayer is not asking God to do something for you while you remain idle; it is the essential condition of the only kind of activity that can overcome the "pull of the world" in order to answer the "call" of Christ. (Vocational Holy Hour every Thursday afternoon from 4:30 to 5:30.)