

Prayers: Bernard Kelsey,
'48, killed in training;
Margaret Layton.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
October 25, 1951

Ill, Father Laskowski is
much improved but continue
prayers.

A Case Of Good Judgment!

Each year the Bulletin manages to rehash the traditional argument for NIGHT PRAYER IN COMMON in order to recoup for the Real Presence the "real absentees." Before the war attendance at Night Prayer was more or less compulsory--more or less, that is, because the lights were doused. There was no check, but the boys who were afraid of the dark usually found their way to the chapel.

As usual, there were gripes about "religion being forced down our throats." In spite of the beefing the attendance was respectable for young men who had been reared in a Catholic environment where night prayer in common is a family custom.

Of course, there were those graceful souls who pirouetted past the chapel door for the hinterland, just as there were less graceful ones who pirouetted to the chapel door for morning check and then sailed upward--these pajama-clad spirits--without so much as a melodramatic exchange of greeting in the chapel where Christ dwells and waits. . . and . . . waits.

Times have changed but not human nature. The pre-war plea for widening the areas of student initiative and for breaking down the frontiers of constraint were honest pleas of young men who were dead in earnest about their insincerity. "Cut out this compulsory night-prayer business, and we'll fill your chapels. . . Why, we'll even get down to Mass if you scratch morning check."

Tremendous things did not happen. The heavens did not crack open with a burst of eerie light. There was nothing particularly spectacular about the chorus of spiritless allelulias when the lights stayed on. They are still on. Tonight take a look. Dillon hall is a case in point. Of our 445 residents, ~~not more than thirty are on hand to re-~~new their acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition. ~~These men are juniors, mind you,~~ not one year removed from the infections of sophomoreitis.

"What's dat?" said an innocent-looking sophomore. . . It is a period of mental, often-times spiritual, depression, during which "wise fools" let the gifts of God fall out of their hands by complete inertia and trample underfoot the delicate growths of prayer and Sacrament cultivated so faithfully their freshman year.

It usually comes under outside observation when it causes a radical drop in communicants, or a superfluity of pink slips after examinations, or a decided rebellion against religion in general and discipline in particular.

A characteristic symptom is an itchy urge to rub sandpaper over the chest because its victim realizes he isn't the man he thought he was at the close of his freshman year . . . Another symptom is frustration and compensation--the fierce impulse to tear up something, whether it's a book as a protest against routine, or whether it's the dignified town of South Bend. If the mental quirk is not lived through under strong will-power, not cheerfully met and conquered, it will overflow like a good head on a glass of beer into the junior and senior years. Without proper direction the victim gets chuckle-headed and thinks getting drunk is the only answer for him.

Think It Over.

Is it an imposition to expect Catholic students to pray each night as a group in the presence of Christ who is just as personally present in the chapel as they are? . . . to renew their faith in God in these days when there is so much faithlessness in the land? . . . to renew their hope in God when the world is on the verge of despair. . . to re-
new their love of God in these days when there is so much hate. . . to beg God's for-
fiveness for our sins of neglect, laziness, unkindness, and the rest?