

Tonight at 6:45 in
Sacred Heart Church:
Sorrowful Mother Novena.

University of Notre Dame
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Tonight at 8:15 in the drill
hall: the remarkable story
of Lieut. Tom Dooley, USN.

The Holy Father's Intention

This month we are asked to pray for an "Esteem For Vocations" among the faithful. Occasionally, you may read of some celebrity, disappointed in love, or business, or life, seeking refuge in a vocation -- and waking to the realization that it takes sterner stuff than a broken heart, or poor arithmetic, to survive. Here the results are laughable, especially for those who live temporarily with the character. His calling was no vocation, and deserves no respect.

American Catholics have always regarded a true vocation with esteem, because it is a special gift and blessing of God on the individual and on his family. Some of us may find it puzzling to discover that elsewhere some benighted few frown on the idea, thinking perhaps that a life is being thrown away, or talents buried, or that the sacrifice is too much. Or maybe the idea conflicts with social or business aspirations of a doting father or mother. And so they discourage the vocation.

It is to these that the Holy Father speaks, asking them to examine their conscience. Indirectly, he reminds them that they should have a little more respect for God's Wisdom and God's Providence in choosing and clothing certain individuals with the garb of religion. Today the Church is crying for vocations. And today the Church offers the widest development of talents, especially in the field of education.

All of us are called upon to be generous, and forgetful of selfish interests when a vocation comes to a relative or acquaintance, because it is a call to work directly with Christ for the salvation of all souls. If we know and honor Christ, it follows that we will also know and honor Him in those whom He has chosen.

A Divine Form Of Charity

You know that every Christian is called to be an apostle insofar as it lies in his power to spread the Kingdom of God on earth. You don't have to wear a religious garb to do this, either. For example: only recently, several working girls in New York pooled their entertainment money during Lent, collected \$600, and found it adequate to support a seminarian for a year. Certainly they showed esteem for a vocation.

Another example that hits home: At Christmas time, a group of employees here on campus pooled the funds they were to spend for an exchange of gifts, and then sent the money to one of the missions, thus enabling a poor man with a vocation to bring the Word of God to new recesses in the little corner of God's Vineyard entrusted to him.

Tonight, those of you who go (and you should all go) to the drill hall to listen to the remarkable story of Lieut. Tom Dooley, the Navy doctor who authored the best-seller, Deliver Us From Evil, may hear him touch upon the valiant support he received from another employee of the University who, in her own quiet way, and in a degree that her finances permitted, sent bundles of essential clothing for the wretched children who came to him in dire need -- thus enabling him to bring tangible proof of the charity of Christ into their lives, and so give evidence of, and substance to, the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. Her deeds made possible his actions which were better than any sermon he might have preached. Incidentally, listening to this valiant Notre Dame man tonight will afford you an opportunity to measure the divine aspect of charity that attaches itself to any form of a true vocation.

You may not be called to the priesthood or religious life; but you are still called to be an apostle. You can encourage the one with a vocation. You might even be able to finance his training, and so help him move into the front line. Surely, you want some part in the salvation of your neighbor who is every man on earth.