

Bengal Bouts begin in
the gym tonight. Don't
pass the buck. Give it!

"If you aren't 100% going,
you can still be 100% giv-
ing." You'll be glad you
did.

This Matter Of A Vocation

There wouldn't be anything odd at all about you if, one of these days, the thought that you might have a vocation popped into your mind. You're not overly pious; you never heard a whisper in your ear; you never had any mysterious urge of any kind. The kids in grade school and high school, and even the fellows here at the University, have never told you that you look like a vocation. No priest has ever hinted it to you. Should you chuck all idea of it ?

If you asked for a little advice on the matter, chances are that the priest would caution: "Not too fast with your chucking." You have the thing on the wrong basis. People generally have fluky ideas about what is a vocation. Girl-shyness, gentleness in manner and speech, scrupulous devotion to regular study, and an instinctive piety that often lures a boy to church services and devotions -- these are not the essential signs of a vocation. They might be present in a naturally good but backward boy who had no vocation at all.

Once a tall, straight Man tramped ceaselessly through the cities and country places of Galilee and Judea. He was handsome to look at. His abundant hair fell in rambling curls upon His shoulders. His pitying eyes struck love into the heart of everyone who really looked into them. His voice was soft and kind, but strong. He preached a doctrine of justice and charity, of purity, sincerity and truth. He lived perfectly what He preached.

He came upon earth to change the world through the establishment of a church. His was not the softest way of living. He made bitter enemies and heroic friends. His followers would have to be men of sacrifice, because in the fertility of their sacrifices His doctrines would be born in men's hearts. He died on the cross to give the energy and to show the way.

That Man and His work have struck new love and new purpose in the hearts of sinners like Magdalen, and Paul, and Augustine. His "business" has attracted sinless saints. What, then, are the inevitable signs of the "call," ?

It is the urge or inclination to give your life entirely as a priest or Brother, to cut yourself off from the pursuit of riches and the realization of worldly ambition, to forego the joys of the home you would establish, to help Him propagate His way of life upon earth. Would you like to work in parish, or classroom, or pulpit, or in an editorial room, aiding men to be better Christians ? If you would, you have the first step in a vocation -- the desire.

But you must have capabilities, too: health, head, and some degree of holiness. Your confessor can tell you whether you are "good" or holy enough. Leave that part of it up to him. And any priest who has known you long can settle your doubts regarding health and head.

Never mind about "voices" or what people think about you. If you merely have the desire, go to some priest's room and talk the matter over confidentially. You will probably feel like putting the thing off. But go anyway, today or tomorrow. The priest you see will not strong-arm you into a cassock. It is probably far more important to you than it is to the welfare of the Church, or of any religious community, that you solve any doubts you have on the matter of your calling -- for your happiness here, and for your eternal salvation.

One final note -- Pray. Pray to know what God wants you to be.