

University of Notre Dame
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Thoughts for the Weekend

The little weekend retreat in all the halls will afford you a chance for a check-up as we move toward the middle of Lent. How go about it? Where to start? The following lines should afford you an adequate examination of conscience:

Am I a good Notre Dame man? What does that mean to me? I have ideals for the Notre Dame man, and different men around me live up to those ideals; but am I failing to live up to my ideals? How many students, how many priests, how many lay professors, would put me down as a real Notre Dame man, if they were asked the question?

Am I better than I was last year at this time? Or worse? Have I committed more sins this year than last year? Have I learned to avoid dangers? Have I made a fool of myself any time during the past year? How many times?

Am I a good advertisement for my home training -- for the kind of parents I have? Do girls I have met in the past year respect me as a gentleman? Do I command respect in my crowd? How many people suspect that I am a gentleman?

Am I a leader or a follower? How much leadership have I shown at Notre Dame -- not as a politician, but as a moral force for good? How many men have I helped avoid sin? How many have I brought to their spiritual senses? Have I done anything to help the fellow next to me out of a spiritual rut? When a small, sleazy group of Upperclassmen in the neighborhood tavern down the Avenue sing foul songs, am I brave enough to show disapproval? Or have I been a moral coward in this respect?

Have I really started Lent yet? What does it mean to me? What have I really done in a positive way? What have I done in the way of self-denial? What of my language? Do I chastise my body to bring it under subjection? Have I actually heeded the Bishop's admonition to attend daily Mass and the Lenten Series? Did I sign up for Adoration and keep that promise? Did I care enough about my own death to make the First Friday this week?

How much money am I spending these weeks and for what? How much on movies? On dates? On liquor? On weekends? How much good did I get out of what I spent? Did it elevate me in the eyes of my mother? My girl friend? How much money have I given to charity during the past year? To the Church? To the Missions?

Now check the adjectives which you think describe your character: good, bad, weak, strong, unstable, stubborn, crabby, insolent, boorish, noble, practical, sober, petty, childish, courageous, cowardly, unreasonable, affable, gentlemanly, stingy, foolish, energetic.

And am I humble enough to admit my limitations?

This is a good, quiet weekend for a spiritual check-up. And after you assemble your findings, it will be comforting to recall that it isn't too late to make the most of the Lenten Season by doing something about those findings.

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Today is the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, patron of Catholic scholarship. He's the saint to ask for the courage it takes to hit the books, and use our time well, and see to it that our learning leads us closer to God, and ultimately to Heaven.

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Tomorrow: watch the bulletin boards in your hall for the schedule of your retreat!