

Adoration tomorrow for
Dillon, Pangborn, and
Sorin halls.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Closing out St. Andrew
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A Story Of Courage

On Easter Sunday, we lost Senior Rodger Kenney through leukemia. Many of you knew him but casually; others, not at all. His background may interest you, possibly help you to appreciate your own good fortune.

His father died when he was five. His mother, a nurse, provided subsistence to the best of her ability. But Rodger was a good, healthy youngster who kept himself occupied at odd jobs throughout his grammar and high school years to provide his tuition. He won letters in track, and captained the football team. He also won the mathematics award, and was elected a Class officer. His record on and off the athletic field caught the attention of scouts from a number of universities. To all of them Rodger turned a deaf ear - he wanted only Notre Dame. The scouts and their scholarships, and sales pitch impressed him not at all.

And what did he get at Notre Dame? Part-time jobs, partial scholarships which he merited by his scholastic record, student loans, and an atmosphere that he relished.

In the fall semester of his Junior year, he discovered that he had chronic leukemia. He knew his disease, and his limited prospects of recovering. His sickness forced him to leave school. Later, through medication, the disease was brought under temporary control through weekly check-ups, blood counts, and medication. He refused to give up and returned to school. Perhaps his greatest cross was his growing dependence on others. A trapper, a hunter, an athlete, a boy who liked to dance on occasion -- now he found his strong body crumbling in spite of his spirit and his determination to plan for the future. Soon he was unable to walk more than two or three blocks. Even his limited luggage grew too heavy for him to lift. The number of blood transfusions mounted; and so did the daily number of pills required to counteract the dreaded affliction. Now these were so many humiliations which he accepted with remarkable patience.

Because of his youth and his nature, he continued to hope and to plan. Yet he was realistic enough to cancel job interviews that came in his Senior year. Nor could he any longer think of becoming engaged -- not for a long time yet. And not once did he complain, or ask: "Why does this have to happen to me?" His resignation was an indication of his courage, because he was far from ignorant of the disease that enveloped him so thoroughly. Nor was it a show of bravado of one who refuses to face reality.

He had always gone to Communion frequently. Now he received Our Lord daily. Each day he continued to pray for recovery -- if such was the Will of God. And he knew that only God could do this thing. Instead, God gave him the grace of submission and perseverance. The day before he died, he knew the end was near, and asked to be anointed. Fear had no part in his last hours - he has nothing to fear.

Rodger had the good fortune to be looked after by friends whose charity toward him rivaled that of the Good Samaritan of the Gospel. On their part, they felt amply rewarded for their efforts by what he gave to them in his uncomplaining acceptance of his personal tragedy, his courage, and faith, and resignation -- an example that deepened their own faith, and their appreciation of God's gifts.

You have a strong body, a good mine, and a golden opportunity before you. What will you do with them?

PRAYERS REQUESTED - Deceased: mother of Cyprian Spurl, '29; relative of Leo Sweeney of Dillon; friend of Ray Miller (O_C); aunt of Dan Cronin of Morrissey; Charles P. O'Neill, A.B. '41; Prof. Frank Skeeler (EE. Dept.). Ill: Abe Zoss and Barney Lynch.