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## Remarks by Very Rev. John R. Portman at Baccalaureate Mass Immaculata

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Remarks by Very Rev. John R. Portman  
at Baccalaureate Mass  
Immaculata  
May 29, 1970

"A common thread runs through the lives of some seemingly unlikely comrades," said the Very Rev. John R. Portman at the Baccalaureate Friday May 29 at the Immaculata for the graduating class of the University of San Diego.

Father Portman linked together the visions of Moses and John Wesley, Isaiah, Paul, Augustine and Robert Kennedy, of Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Sienna and Dietrich Bonheffer, Ignatius of Loyola, Theresa of Avila and Martin Luther King. "All were revolutionaries," Father Portman said, "and all had similar life styles. Each had his own desert, each had a vision.

"The desert experience of Christ at the very beginning of His public ministry was a preparation for his mission. He suffered and was tempted--tempted to deviate from his vision. There is no lasting vision without blood, sweat and tears, no glory without sacrifice, and absorbtion into our life. The desert is to think, to pray and perhaps to suffer."

He asked the graduating class, "What is our vision? Your past four years have been spent in developing a Christian perspective in the Catholic tradition. The aim has been a vision based on sound Christian values.

"The attaining of such a vision takes hard work in order to overcome the blissful certitude and absence of doubt that comes with ignorance. Your education has been a thrust to put multifaceted truth in perspective, for one truth balances another, not by deminishing its force, but by putting it into context."

He added, "The meaning and purpose of life--of all human activity, of all knowledge--is incarnated in Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

"The values you have studied and partially absorbed need a continuing

(Guare)

translation--daily. The ability to stand back from the situation--to glimpse--to see the real meaning of things is needed so that we do not become immeshed and immersed in the murky morass of our own petty needs but are able to see the broader issues, the Christian, Catholic principles by which we live our lives. This requires time--this I submit is the purpose of prayer, worship, sacraments and the Mass.

"All the men and women I spoke of did this. Some of you are going to work Monday morning, You are right into it--right now. The style of life you determine will deeply affect and effect your vision. We are not any more busy than Christ, an Augustine, a Paul, a Wesley, a Teresa, a Bonhoeffer, a King or a Kennedy.

"It just takes time and effort, a bit of creativity and imagination to prevent ourselves from losing our vision--from coping out and falling into the 'rat race'.

"Subdue the earth are the words of Genesis. The call to transform the world is but a part of a larger movement of God's people of which the Sacred Writer gives us a vision when he says: I saw a new heaven and a new earth.. I saw the holy city and the new Jerusalem.. Here God lives among people, and he will be their God; his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes: there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The past has gone".

"We have the vision given us by Christ. It is ours to translate continually into our lives with His help, so that we may do our thing--to transform the world."

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