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Redemptorist Fathers
AT
**NOTRE DAME
RETREAT HOUSE**

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A Weekend With God

Periods of silence for prayer and reflection alternate with lively hours of dialogue in a typical weekend retreat at Notre Dame.

Retreatants check in on Friday evening, gather for an opening talk in the chapel and then adjourn to the lounge for a film which underlines some theme of the retreat.

A fruitful silence pervades the house early Saturday morning from the 7:40 a.m. meditation through breakfast, a 9:15 conference, group rosary and another conference in the lounge.

With plenty of brain food from the conferences and contemplative silence, the retreatants are ready for a topical dis-

cussion on the theme which follows the 10:45 a.m. conference, and carries over to the luncheon table.

Silence returns after lunch, for a rest period and another conference at 2:30 p.m. Opportunities for private confession in the afternoon are followed by a symbolic act of public penance—the stations of the cross. Then comes the community Mass.

Supper offers another chance for exchange of views, followed by two hours of silence, the second part being a Holy Hour in chapel.

Dialogue returns at 9:15 in the lounge, and by now the retreatants have much to discuss. The floor is open to discussion

flowing from the theme presented or floor topical discussion. The retreat master does as little "directing" as possible in this time. He helps the men achieve the experience of "being the church."

"If a man asks a question, I try to pass the buck on to the others and let them answer it. Between them, they manage to thrash out the matter very competently," Father Richard Moran explains.

With little prompting the Saturday night discussion runs to midnight, and in a few cases has gone on into the wee hours in small group sessions.

Sunday Mass is at 7:30 a.m. followed by breakfast and a 9:15 conference. A final period of silence during which the Rosary is said by small groups walking about the grounds, each man offering some thought for meditation on the mysteries and a last conference follow.

The Sunday noon dinner is a high spirited meal, with dialogue flowing thick and fast.

Thus goes the typical weekend on the new schedule at Notre Dame. There's still time for prayerful silence and reflection, but the vital ingredient of dialogue, each man contributing as he chooses, has added a new note of realism and dynamism to a Notre Dame retreat.



Frank McDonough, veteran of 25 retreats, with Father Whelan.

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