

Fulton J. Sheen: “Treasure in Clay” (his autobiography)

making reference to the Scriptures: “Take and read.”

I can never remember a time in my life when I did not want to be a priest. In the early teens my father would send us to work on one of his farms. I recall doing spring plowing, watching the young corn come up under my eyes; as I saw the rich dark soil turned over, I would say the Rosary begging for a vocation. I never mentioned my vocation to others, not even to my parents, although others often told my parents they thought that I would become a priest. Being an altar boy at the cathedral fed the fires of vocation, as did the inspiration of the priests who visited our home almost every week. Not to be omitted was the Rosary, which was said every evening by the family before retiring.

My First Communion at the age of twelve was another special appeal to the Lord to grant me the grace of priesthood. But I always had one doubt—and that was my worthiness.

Never once did my mother or father say a word to me about becoming a priest, nor did I speak to them about it until the day I went to the seminary. Their only response then was: “We always prayed that you might become a priest; if it is your vocation, be a good one.” I often would hear relatives and friends who visited my parents talk about me, saying that I would become a priest. And my younger brother Joe said that I liked to entertain visitors with little talks that I had prepared. For myself, I do not remember that.

A vocation is so very sacred that one does not like to