



We need friends who inspire us to a higher level of holiness and lead us on the path to heaven'

Kenya's David Rudisha holds the world record for the 800 meter race, which he ran in 1 minute, 40.91 seconds, in August 9, 2012. His incredible pace pushed all the runners to incredible times: "With Rudisha breaking 1:41, two men under 1:42, five under 1:43, and all eight under 1:44, it was the greatest-depth 800m race in history," said the International Association of Athletes.

It was the first time in the history of international 800 meter competition that every runner either ran a personal best or a season's best.

Friends should inspire and challenge us to be better Christians, better spouses, better professionals. In working with men and women on their spiritual journeys, I often ask, "Do your friends love their spouses? Do your friends give their time, treasure and talent to help those in need? Do your friends know and love Jesus Christ, and can you talk freely about your faith with them in a social setting?"

During my high school and college years, I had the blessing of being a part of the Regnum Christi, a movement of apostolate connected with the Legionaries of Christ. We had weekly meetings on Sunday evening to discuss a Gospel reading and a relevant case study that would challenge us to be better apostles and more authentic Catholics.

This band of brothers held me accountable to very high moral standards, and their presence in my high school hallways, chapels and athletic fields constantly encouraged me to live with excellence in mind. One of the members of this team, Kevin Jones (not his real name), became my roommate at Michigan State; his impact on my soul during these formative years was massive.

He came up with the idea that we would have to pay each other \$25 if we ever came back to our dorm room drunk — and he never had to pay me a penny. He often helped me discern which friends we could trust, which girls would be appropriate to date, and which parties were OK to attend (and which were too out-of-control and needed to be avoided).

He outhustled everyone in our basketball games, and he was known to look for the open man before “forcing” a shot. He noticed when you were down, and his creative sense of humor would kick in to immediately pick you back up again. Kevin prayed his rosary every day (even when he came in really late, I would see him kneel on the floor and bring out the beads). He meditated on Scripture before going to bed, went to Mass every Sunday and regular Confession, and he pursued excellence in every aspect of his life, including basically straight-As in electrical engineering.

He was my “David Rudisha,” and without a doubt, his friendship pushed me to a different level.

The Greek historian Plutarch stated: “I don’t need a friend who changes when I change and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better.” We don’t need friends who foster mediocrity. We need friends who will inspire us to a higher level of holiness and self-giving, friends who will lead us on the path to heaven — and friends who remind us of who we are and whom we are called to be.

<https://www.regnumchristinyctnj.org/index.php/2017/05/23/what-brotherhood-did-for-my-faith/>