

# The Acolyte

Magazine



Issue #12  
Winter 2012-2013

**The Acolyte Magazine** • Issue #12, Winter 2012-2013  
by the ArchConfraternity of Saint Stephen  
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# Contents

<b>A Letter From the Top</b> .....	page 2
by Father Arnaud Rostand	
<b>Gravi Nuntii (Important News)</b> .....	page 3
Letter from the Director	
<b>Soul of the Acolyte</b> .....	page 4
<i>Cathedrals of God</i> by Father Gerard Beck	
<b>The Apologist</b> .....	page 6
<i>Do People Have Souls?</i> by Father Daniel Themann	
<b>Rules of Engagement</b> .....	page 13
by Father Daniel Themann	
<b>Pinacotheca Gildica: The ACSS Chapter Updates</b> .....	page 17
<i>Saint Vincent de Paul Chapter</i> by Louis Tofari	
<b>per Breuiorem OR per Longiorem</b> .....	page 21
<i>The Moderate Pace</i> by Louis Tofari	
<b>U.I.O.G.D.</b> .....	page 24
<i>Ad Quid Venisit?</i> by a Benedictine Monk	
<b>Legenda Fabellæ: A Continuing Story</b> .....	page 28
<i>A Heroic Sacrifice</i>	
<b>Saint Stephen's Storehouse</b> .....	page 33
Price Listing	
ACSS Order Form	
<b>Thanks to our Volunteers</b> .....	page 37

# Letter from the Top

Dear Acolytes,

One of the most beautiful functions of an altar server is to serve as Acolyte at a Low or High Mass. It might sound strange to you since you may prefer to serve as MC or Thurifer because it looks more important! However, the function of Acolytes is the most noble because "*it is to prepare that which will be the matter of the sacrament, the wine and the water which are going to be transformed into the substance of the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (- Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre - Econe - March 23, 1985)

The Acolytes bring the matter of the Sacrament to the priest and to the altar. He is closest to the priest - the closest participation to the Holy Eucharist.

As a matter of fact, in the early Church this function was reserved only to clerics who had received the minor order of *Acolyte*, the highest minor order before receiving the *Subdiaconate*. That's how important and sacred is the function of an Acolyte at Mass.

"*Receive the cruet, to minister wine and water for the sacrifice of the Blood of Christ in the name of the Lord*", says the bishop to the seminarians who are receiving the order of Acolyte.

Even though you do not receive the holy order of Acolyte, the Church yet allows you to act and serve as Acolytes. What a great honour! But any honour comes with an *onus*, a duty. That is why, the Church who allows you to take part in the Sacrament of the Holy Mass, invites you to fulfill that role with great purity of heart.

Remember this each time you serve Mass, prepare yourself as much as possible by a good confession, say your prayers before and after Mass with a great desire to please God, and offer your heart to the Good Lord whom you are serving so closely.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary be always with you and keep your heart pure so you may serve Her Divine son worthily.

With my prayers and blessing,  
In the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



Father Arnaud Rostand  
District Superior of the United States



# ⚡ GRAVI NUNTII ⚡

## Letter from the Director

Dear Guild Members,

Greetings to you and many blessings from our Good God! It is our sincere hope that you are all doing well, and that your Chapters have kept their first fervor. It is certain that if we do our best to follow the rules and spirit of the Guild, we will make excellent progress in our spiritual life, add to the grandeur of the ceremonies and edify countless souls.

Just a little update on what fruits your support has helped to produce for the Guild. The ArchConfraternity continues to grow across the Globe. We have witnessed the launching of new Chapters in the Dominican Republic (1), Argentina (1), Chile (1), Australia (1), Poland (1), Canada (1), United States (7), Singapore (1) and Ireland (1). May God Bless these new troops and Saint Stephen guide them so they may be worthy instruments for the Glory of God! Permit me to beg alms for some of these new recruits who live in economically destitute countries. A few of these Chapters have to pay more than twenty “dollars” for every one U.S. dollar, which makes the purchase of their much needed supplies impossible. We have told them that these supplies are expensive even for our U.S. Chapters, but that we would implore your generosity and plead their case. Any help you could offer, even if it is just a few dollars, will be greatly appreciated and rewarded by our Rich King – Who sees every sacrifice we make, and leaves none unpaid. So far we have raised about \$115.00 and we need about \$571 more.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of *The Acolyte*, as much time has gone into its production. We greatly appreciate all the time and hard work donated by our contributors which help make this magazine what it is. We now have a team of eighteen helpers who donate over a thousand hours a year laboring and praying for you, please pray and enlist others to pray for them, thus aiding us in our debt to them. If you would like to show your appreciation to them by a little card, or some such thing, you can mail them to me and I will be sure to pass them on.

Lastly, we would like to thank you for your support both financially and spiritually; we could not continue without your generosity. Be assured of our continual prayers. God grant us the Grace to remain always on His side!

In the company of Saint Stephen

Cui Servire Regnare Est,

*Br. René of Mary*

Brother René of Mary  
National Director for the ACSS





# Soul of the Acolyte

## Cathedrals of God

by Father Gerard Beck

**A**T the moment of your baptism, your soul was transformed in a way that can only be considered stupendous and incredible. Born without grace, without God, your soul was suddenly flooded with Divine Life, and the empty, frigid darkness that had till then been a terrible reality deep within you, gave way to the radiant warmth of the fire of Divine Charity. In that instant, then, your soul became a sanctuary, a cathedral – a sacred place where heaven and earth connect, the domain and dwelling place of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps you have been fortunate enough to visit one of the great churches of the world: St. Patrick's in New York, or St. Peter's in Rome, or the Chartres Cathedral.

When one walks into such a place, the beauty and grandeur are enough to render one speechless – all you can do is gaze in awe, open-mouthed. As magnificent as such a sight is, however, it pales in comparison to the simplest soul in the state of grace!

Our mission as baptized Catholics is to take care of this cathedral of God. We must, then, prevent entry into the soul of anything that could mar its beauty, anything that could profane or desecrate it. It happens, on sad occasion, that evil men break into a church in order to wreck chaos within. Filled with hatred of God, they smash and destroy all that



they find in His house – statues, crucifix, altar, tabernacle. What a terrible sacrilege! But just as enemies of God seek to destroy *churches* that speak to them of God's greatness and holiness, so the enemies of God – with the same hatred – seek to destroy the sanctuary that is the *soul* of each one of us.

It is for us, then, to prevent this desecration of our soul. Nothing unworthy of God must be allowed entry within. It is said that “the eyes are the window of the soul,” and we might say the same thing of the ears – what is taken in through the eyes or ears enters directly into the soul. What we watch – on tv, at the theatre, or on-line – enters our soul. What we listen to – music, conversations – likewise comes into our soul. We must never forget the sacredness of that soul, nor permit entry of anything that does not belong within. It is not just a question of avoiding mortal sin – that is only the first concern. We would never permit a cow to wander around in a church – a cow wouldn't intend any harm to God's house, but it doesn't belong there, and would make a big mess! So the same can be said of many things people watch and listen to – they simply don't belong in the cathedral of God that is the Christian soul, and they make a mess within!

Let us, then, protect our soul. Let us also work to render it an even more beautiful dwelling place of God. Saint John Vianney, the holy curé of Ars, lived a life of great simplicity and poverty when it came to himself. When it came to the church of Ars, however, he did his utmost to see that all was beautiful and worthy of the God in the tabernacle – “Nothing is too good,” the Curé would say, “for the Good God!” And he would go to great expense to prove it.

So it is with the sanctuary of our soul. We must strive, even at great expense, to adorn it with virtues, to render it as worthy of God as we can make it. Purity, obedience, reverence for God – these are precious jewels that adorn the soul. And all within must be gilded with the pure gold of charity; in other words, every effort or offering we make must be motivated by a desire to love and adore the God within, and a desire to help Him save souls.

This is our sacred mission as baptized Catholics. Let us strive manfully to fulfill that mission.

God bless you! ✠





# THE APOLOGIST

## How Do We Know that People Have Souls?

by Reverend Father Daniel Themann



**Souls.** In the last issue of *The Acolyte*, we discussed the question of revelation – what exactly it is, whether it is possible, whether it is useful or even necessary, and finally how it might be recognized. Before pursuing this question of revelation any further, it would be useful to address another question, one which we could answer using revelation but one which we can also answer simply by using our natural reason. *Do human beings have souls or is death the end of everything?* If people do not have souls and if everything ends at death, then it is useless to talk about a judgment or a heaven or a hell. Because many people would prefer not to think about these, they deny that people have anything in them which is spiritual and which will go on living even after the body dies. If we ever meet someone like this, we want to be able to justify our belief (in fact, “belief” is not the best word – “certainty” would be better) that every person has a spiritual and immortal soul. It is possible to prove this with our natural reason alone just as it is possible to prove the existence of God using natural reason alone.

## What Exactly Do We Mean by "Soul"?

This first question is studied in philosophy; hard-working seminarians and college students have to spend many hours trying to understand the answer, so we will try to keep things simple. *A soul is what makes something to be alive.* If that is true, we can better understand a soul by looking at living things (plants, golden retrievers, and your Uncle Randy) and seeing what makes them different from non-living things (rocks, candy bars, and this magazine). All living things have two characteristics in common: first, they can *move themselves*, and second, all *their parts work together* to keep the living thing alive.



You can move in many ways (walking, swimming, throwing a baseball, etc.). Not all living things can move in this way, but they can all move themselves at least in the sense of growing. Plants, for example, do not move like golden retrievers, but growth is a kind of movement (which is obvious if you have ever seen tree roots pushing against a wall or the branches of a big tree pushing the branches of a smaller tree). Rocks and candy bars do not move all by themselves. Also, the parts of a living thing work together for the good of the whole plant or animal or person. The stomach does its job, the heart does its job, etc.

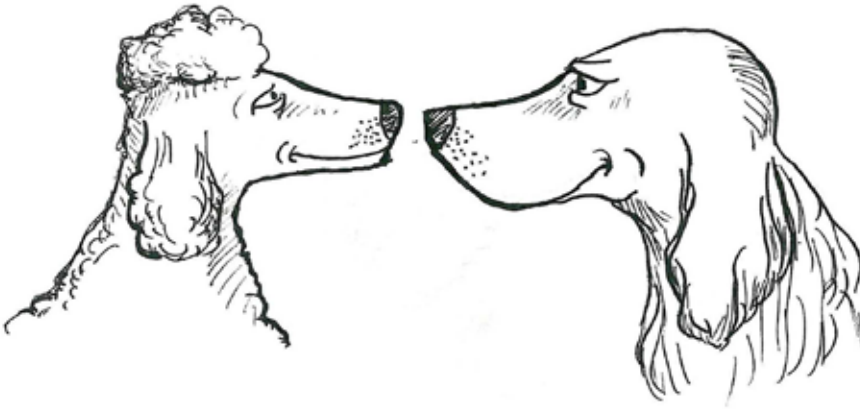
Also, if an important part of the body is damaged, the body automatically takes energy away from the less important parts in order to help the important part to heal as soon as possible. Everything is very well-organized. After thinking about all these things, we are ready to give our definition of a soul – *a soul is the source of organization and movement within a living thing.*



But wait! Someone will ask why there needs to be a soul for a living thing to move and to be organized. Are not living things just naturally that way? But remember a fact that we have already used in these articles – “every effect has a cause.” If a living thing can move in a way that non-living things cannot, and if they stay alive by having all of their parts work together, there must be some *reason or cause* for why this happens. The reason cannot just be the chemicals that the living thing is made of because non-living things are made of exactly the same chemicals. There must be something which is not a chemical, something which is not exactly *matter* at all which makes the matter of a living thing to be alive.

## **The Human Soul is Spiritual**

If a soul is what makes a living thing to be alive, then do not all living things have souls? Does that mean that your mother's rose bushes will die and go heaven? No. There are different kinds of souls, and only human souls are completely spiritual. This is what we have to prove next. For this we need another fact (besides “every effect has a cause”). Here is the next fact which is always true: “a thing acts the way it acts because of how it is.” That should be pretty obvious, but it is a very deep fact of life.

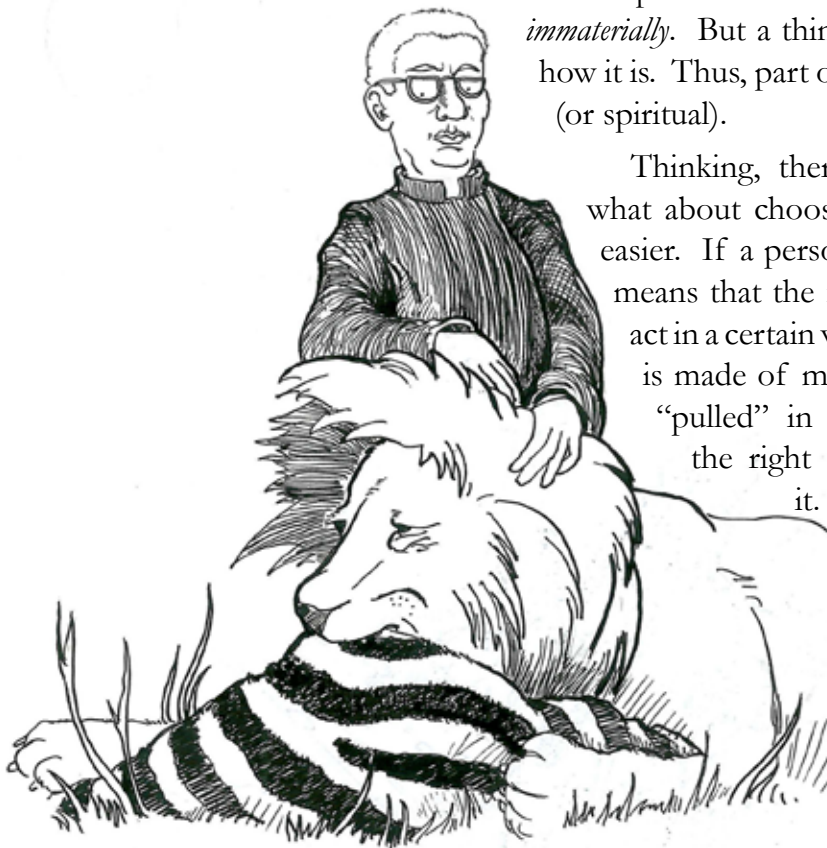


For example, you are able to serve Mass because you are someone who knows how to serve Mass. You are able to act as a server because you are a server. Or you are able to move the altar missal because you are tall enough and strong enough to move it. Here is the point. If a person is able to do spiritual things (things that chemicals or matter are not able to do), it must be because there is more to that person than just chemicals. The person must be spiritual if he can do spiritual things. What kinds of spiritual things can a human person do? There are two basic kinds of spiritual actions which a man does – thinking and choosing (which are done by the intellect and the free will).

What color is truth? How much does loyalty weigh? (You might be thinking at this point that Father has gone a little crazy.) You will answer that truth does not have a color and that loyalty does not weigh anything. Exactly. In other words, they are not made of matter. But you still know what they are. You are able to know things which are not *material* (made of matter). In fact, even when you know material things, you know them in an *immaterial* way. For example, you know what a dog is, and you know

that a golden retriever, a poodle, a German shepherd, and a terrier are all dogs. What color is your idea of “dog”? You will tell me that it depends on the kind of dog – and I will tell you that it does *not*. You use the same *idea* of dog for a white poodle and a golden retriever even if the pictures in your *imagination* are different. As another example, think of a big red bike. Now think of a little blue bike. Your idea of *what a bike is* does not change even if the picture in your imagination does. So all of your ideas, even of material things, do not have a color, shape, size, taste, or anything else. Here

is the important conclusion – you always think *immaterially*. But a thing always acts because of how it is. Thus, part of you must be immaterial (or spiritual).



Thinking, therefore, is a spiritual act; what about choosing? This one is a little easier. If a person truly has free will, this means that the free will *cannot be forced* to act in a certain way. But everything which is made of matter can be “pushed” or “pulled” in a particular direction if the right kind of force is put on

it. But a free will does not work that way. For example, the martyrs were threatened with terrible tortures, and sometimes their own pagan families (whom they loved very much) begged them to offer incense to the false

gods so they would not be killed, but the martyrs were free, and nothing forced them to choose one thing or the other. Again, if the soul is able to *do* this spiritual action of choosing, it can only be because the soul itself *is* spiritual.

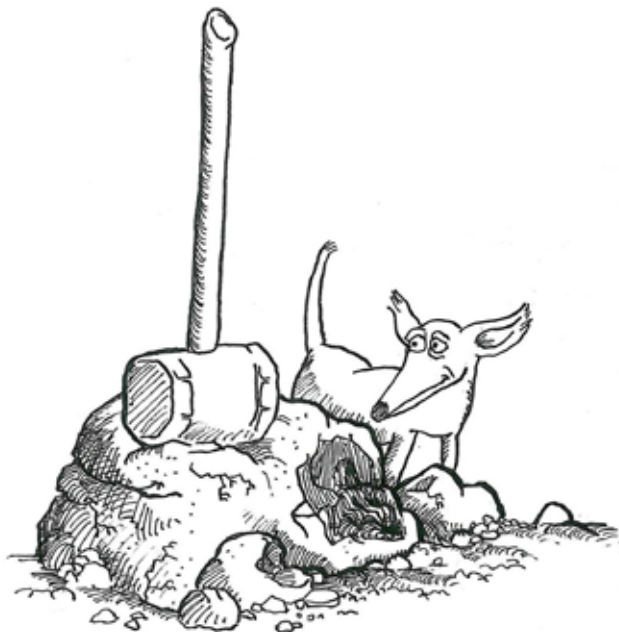
Some people, nowadays, try to get around this argument by denying that man really has a free will. This is rather silly because everyone is aware that they are free.

Even these people who deny free will know that they have the job which they have or the wife whom they have because they freely *chose* them. In fact, they are only trying to convince you that they do not believe in free will because they are *choosing* to try to convince you. Also, everyone has a sense of justice. For example, everyone is angry when they hear that some criminal has done something wrong to an innocent person. But people would not become angry with the criminal unless they thought that the criminal could have stopped himself from doing wrong. For example, no one gets angry when a lion kills a zebra for food because they know that the lion is just acting by instinct. But anyone who believes that people should act in a just way *must* believe in freedom. Therefore, from both of these kinds of spiritual actions (thinking and choosing), we can prove that the soul is spiritual.

### **The Human Soul is Immortal**

We are almost finished proving what we set out to prove. We have shown that the soul must be spiritual (or immaterial), because it can do spiritual things. But our

goal was to show that the soul will go on living after the body dies. What does being spiritual have to do with being *immortal* (not capable of dying)? In fact, everything.

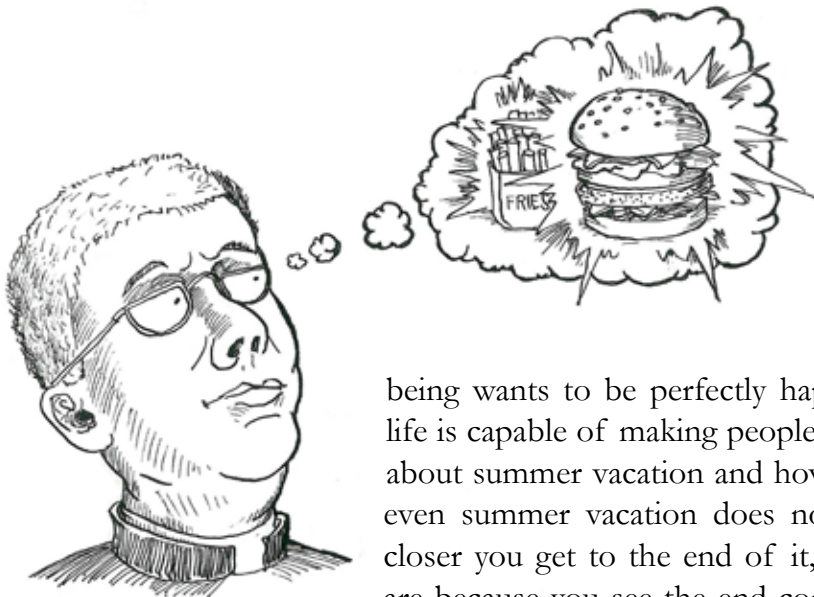


Things which are made of matter have parts. This is true of both living and non-living things. A rock, for example, can be broken into smaller rocks or can even dissolved into the different chemicals of which it is made. Actually, this is always how things are destroyed – by being broken apart in some way. But something which is immaterial does not have parts so it cannot be broken down into pieces. When someone dies, the soul leaves the body which is why

the body cannot live anymore. Without the soul, the body loses its organization and begins to turn back into dust, but the soul does not have parts so it cannot break down.

It was what made the body to be an organized, self-moving thing. The body needed it, but it did not need the body. If the soul was able to do things higher than matter (like thinking and choosing), then *it must itself be* higher than matter. So whatever is immaterial is immortal and vice versa. This is also why angels cannot die. They are very much like the souls of people except much more powerful. Both angels and souls are naturally immortal. The only way they could stop existing is if God decided to stop keeping them in existence (remember from your catechism that God keeps all things in existence by His almighty power). But it does not make sense that God would go through the trouble to make certain creatures which are naturally immortal just so that He could “zap” them out of the universe later!

### **A Few Other Arguments**



What has been explained so far is the main argument for the immortality of the soul, but there are a few other arguments that make a lot of sense as well. The first has to do with the fact that every human

being wants to be perfectly happy but nothing in this life is capable of making people perfectly happy. Think about summer vacation and how much you like it. But even summer vacation does not last forever, and the closer you get to the end of it, the sadder you already are because you see the end coming. And even during vacation, you have to take some time off to sleep when you would rather play all the time! Or think of some toy that you always wanted and how happy you were when you finally received it. Do you still like playing with it now or have you moved on to another toy? Everything becomes boring after awhile. Or think of your favorite food. Now think of having the taste of that food in your mouth all the time... at every moment of every day... without ever being able to taste



anything else... forever. Yuck! So even the things that we like very much cannot make us perfectly happy. But it does not make sense that all human beings would want something (perfect happiness) which does not even exist. So it makes more sense to say that it does exist. But since it does not exist in this life, it must exist after this life; however, human beings must keep living after death if they are meant to enjoy this happiness.

Another argument comes back to that sense of justice that every person has. In this life, it is obvious that good people sometimes suffer unjustly and that evil people do not always suffer what they are justly due. As mentioned in the last installment of *The Apologist*, we can prove from reason that there is a God and we can even prove some of His characteristics. Among these are His wisdom and His power. If God is all-wise and all-powerful, it is unreasonable to think that He would permit so much injustice during this life unless He planned on correcting the injustice at some future time after this life. But this could not happen unless people lived on after death to receive the punishment or reward which they did not receive before dying.

All of these considerations should make us aware of just how important we are in the eyes of God. Because of our souls, it is true to say that human beings are naturally creatures of eternity. We will outlast everything else which we see in the world. They will pass away, but we will remain. How silly it is then to place so much importance on the things of this world – money, toys, clothes – which are so far beneath us. ✠



# RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

## FIELD TACTIC APOLOGETICS

by Father Daniel Themann

**PRIVATE:** Sir, I have a problem about the soul.

**MAJOR:** Well, then you should go to confession.

**PRIVATE:** No, sir, I mean I have a problem when it comes to proving to people that we have souls.

**MAJOR:** Oh, well that is different. Maybe I can help you with that.

**PRIVATE:** Well, sir, I tried to explain to a lady I know that we must have souls because we are able to do certain things like thinking. I told her that we think with our soul, and so we must have a soul.

**MAJOR:** And what did the lady say?

**PRIVATE:** She said,

“Not so fast! Everyone knows that thinking is done by the brain, not by the soul. That is why, if someone hurts their head very badly in an accident, they lose their ability to think.”

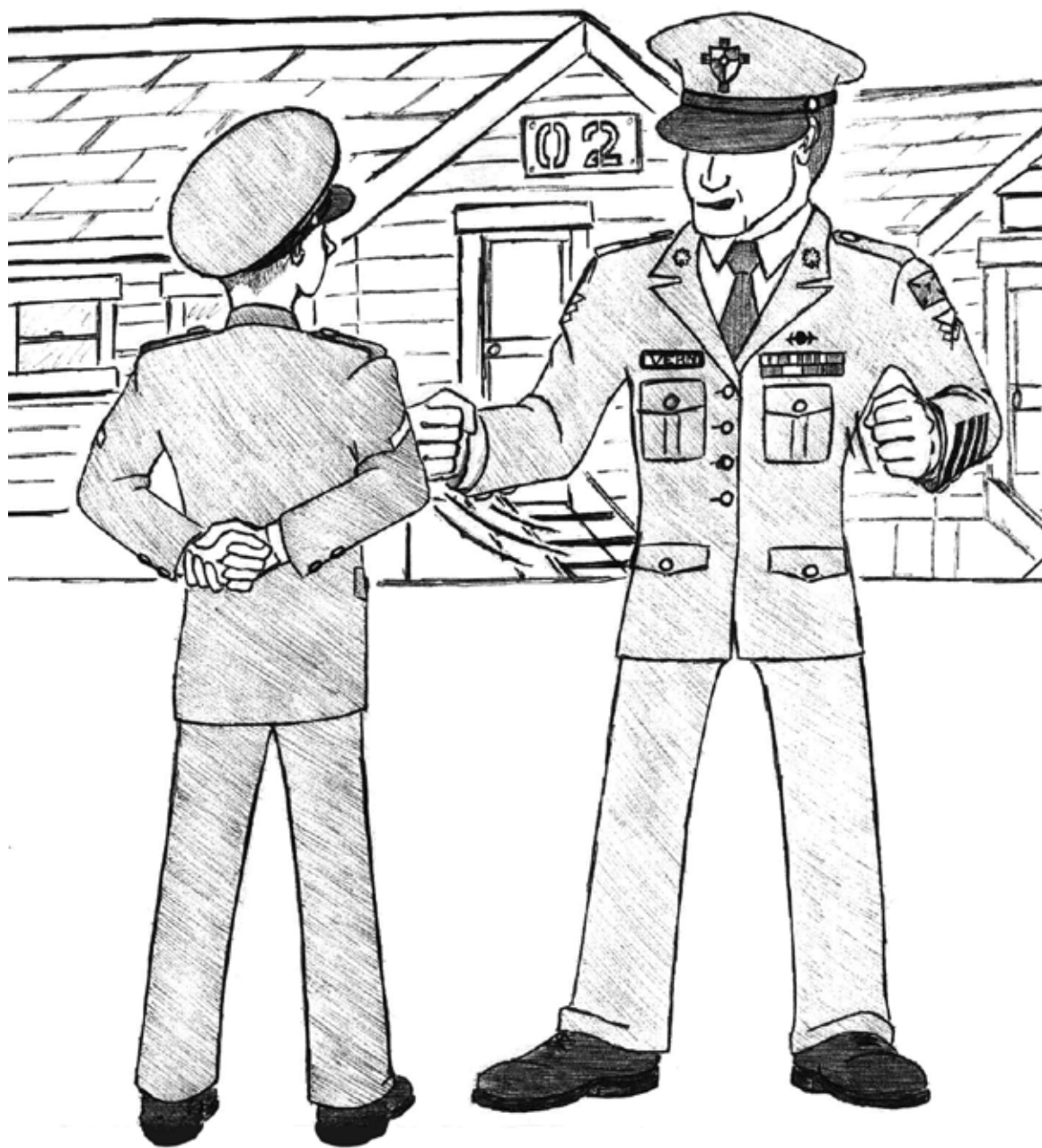
That is when I remembered my cousin who hurt his head really bad in a car wreck, and sure enough, he had a really hard time thinking after that. So I did not know what to say.

**MAJOR:** There is some truth in what this lady said, but this piece of truth still does not prove what she thinks it proves.

**PRIVATE:** It doesn't?







**MAJOR:** No, son. Now listen. The brain is certainly *involved* in the process of thinking – we do not deny that. What we do deny is that the brain does the thinking all by itself. That is not possible because the brain is made of matter, and thinking requires something immaterial to be involved. So the brain is like a tool used by the soul in its work. Now take a paint brush used by the artist when he paints a picture. If the paint brush is dirty or damaged, the picture will not turn out very well. Or think of a violin which is used by a musician to make music. The music will sound bad (even if the musician is very talented) if the violin is broken or out of tune.

**PRIVATE:** So the soul is like a violin?

**MAJOR:** Private, get your head on straight! I am saying that the soul is like the artist or the musician and that the soul uses the brain as a tool just like the artist uses his brush and the musician uses his violin. If the brain is damaged, thinking will be difficult or impossible just like if the paint brush or the violin is damaged then painting or making good music will be difficult or impossible. The observation which the lady made just proves that the brain is *involved* in thinking. It does not prove that the brain is the *only thing* involved. If her argument were true, it would also “prove” that the paint brush paints all by itself and that the violin plays all by itself – which is ridiculous.

**PRIVATE:** Sir, I think I understand, but I have another problem.

**MAJOR:** Well, out with it.

**PRIVATE:** This lady also said that people aren't the only ones who can think. She said that animals can think too. She said that scientists have discovered that monkeys are very smart because if you put a monkey in a cage with a stick, it will finally figure out how to use the stick to knock bananas off a hook so it can eat them. So if thinking proves there is a soul, then monkeys must have souls too.

**MAJOR:** Son.

**PRIVATE:** Yes, Major.

**MAJOR:** Have monkeys ever put scientists in a cage with a stick to study how

smart scientists are?

**PRIVATE:** Not that I know of, sir.

**MAJOR:** Exactly. God gives animals the tools they need to solve animal problems like how to get food, how to escape from enemies, and things like that. Animals have memories, and they have imaginations so they can solve these kinds of problems. But what people do not understand is that all the problems which scientists invent to see if monkeys can think are *animal* problems like how to get food. When monkeys start solving *people* problems like how to pay their taxes or how to teach young privates their apologetics, *then* I will think about whether or not monkeys have souls.

**PRIVATE:** That makes sense.

**MAJOR:** Private, everything I say makes sense! And remember that animals do everything the same way they have always done them while people learn from their mistakes and get better and better over time. If animals had intellects, they would learn the way people do, and they would communicate their ideas with a language the same way that people do. If animals have not invented a language to express their ideas, it must be because they have no ideas to express.

**PRIVATE:** Sir, how do you know so much?

**MAJOR:** I *learned*, son, by paying attention to people who knew more than I knew. Learn while you are young, son. Don't pretend that you know everything already. God gave you two ears and only one mouth for a reason.

**PRIVATE:** What reason is that?

**MAJOR:** My goodness! You *do* have a lot to learn. ✂

# Pinacotheca Childica

## The ACSS Chapter Updates

St. Vincent de Paul Church is the largest and one of the most magnificent churches the Society of St. Pius X possesses in the United States. It is also home to the SSPX's Kansas City, Missouri chapter of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen, which has played an instrumental role for the Guild's establishment in America.

St. Vincent's actually has two calls to fame concerning the Guild. In early 1995, it



was the first chapter started in the SSPX's United States District. It also hosted the original office for the National Headquarters, then headed by its first (and current) chapter president, Louis Tofari, who was assisted by chapter members with various tasks such as filling chapter orders, publishing *The Acolyte* magazine, and general administration.

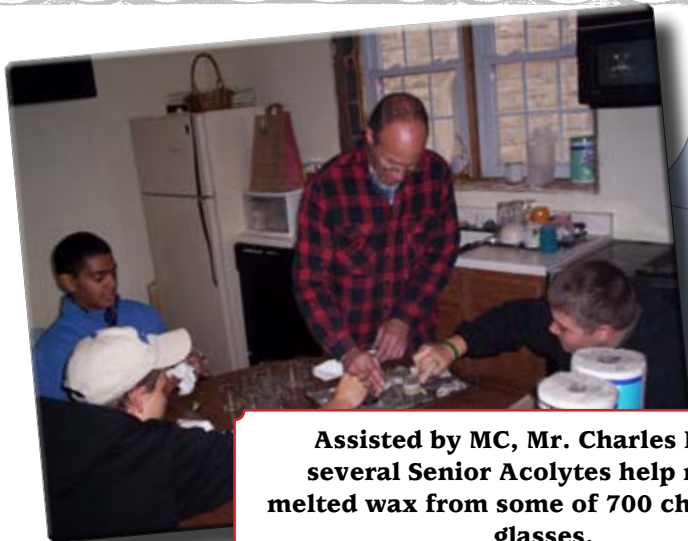
Currently the chapter has 106 active members comprised of adults and adolescents, though several are away at other schools

during the academic year. One of its former members, Mr. Charles Deister, is presently studying for the priesthood at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, while another, Fr. Daniel Dailey, was ordained to the priesthood in 2010. Several years ago, one of its young Master of Ceremonies, Richard Montgomery, passed away after a gradually-debilitating illness—R.I.P.



# Pinacothé

## The ACSS Ch



Assisted by MC, Mr. Charles Binter,  
several Senior Acolytes help remove  
melted wax from some of 700 chandeliers'  
glasses.

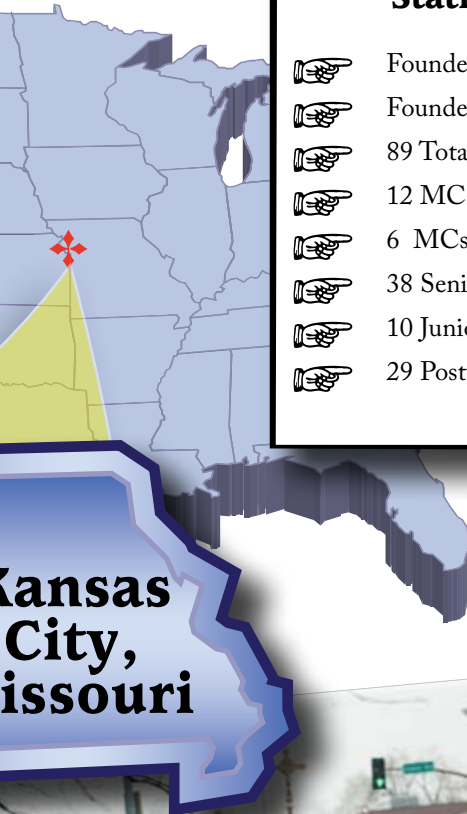


Holy Thursday  
Procession











# Area Guildia

## Chapter Updates



### Statistics:

-  Founded: 1995
-  Founder: Louis Tofari
-  89 Total Members
-  12 MCs
-  6 MCs in training
-  38 Senior Acolytes
-  10 Junior Acolytes
-  29 Postulants



**Liturgical Jeopardy: the Guild Members are quizzed on their knowledge of Sacred things.**



**Votive Mass of St. Stephen the Protomartyr in St. Vincent's basement chapel.**



**Palm Sunday procession ~ red cassocks are used to mark certain festive occasions (along with fancy surplices), otherwise black is normally worn.**

At St. Vincent's, great emphasis is placed on maintaining the Guild's high standards of serving. To accomplish this, the chapter has implemented an effective training program. The various serving positions are trained by specially-instructed trainers, and coupled with a rotating training schedule and the church's extensive facilities, multiple classes can be efficiently offered on a given Saturday. The classes are thorough, teaching not just the basics of each position, but also the symbolisms and general principles behind the rubrics, thus fulfilling the third part of the Guild's object: to learn what the ceremonies mean.

One of the most important classes is for the Latin responses consisting of 5 consecutive sessions of nearly 3 hours each (almost 15 hours total). The postulants learn not only the more romano (translation) responses with their associated reverences and



gestures, but also basic recognition-pronunciation skills, the meaning of the prayers, and how to render them at a moderate pace.

Another important standard of the Guild the Kansas City chapter diligently enforces is the rank system—i.e., only Senior Acolytes serve those positions (e.g., thurifer, acolytes at High Mass, etc.). Just one more implementation of the Archconfraternity's wise directives that contribute to a consistent rendering of excellent service to the Divine King at the altar for His honor as well as the sanctification of the server.

The members of St. Vincent's chapter also benefit from regular meetings, conferences on the liturgy, and back in November 2011, the Senior Acolytes were specially treated to a day of recollection. Of course, there is also the fun in preparing St. Vincent's famous Christmas Midnight Mass chandeliers and the annual St. Stephen's Day Mass and Party. ✠



# per breviorē OR per longiorē

## The Moderate Pace

by Louis J. Tofari

In the Gospel of St. Mark, the perfection of Christ's humanity is described with the phrase "*He hath done all things well.*"<sup>1</sup> Many spiritual writers, particularly monastic ones, elaborate on the Evangelist's praise of Our Savior and give many examples of how we can imitate Him in this aspect in our daily lives – even how one closes a door!

Of course, doing things well is also of the greatest importance at the altar of God and to this end the Guild's handbook has this to say:

Remember that whether you hold the office of Master of Ceremonies, or the more humble one of Torch Bearer, that you are in the service of the King of Kings and are always on parade. The



<sup>1</sup> Mark 7:37

success and rhythm of a parade is secured by the attention given by each member to the minutest detail. So pay the greatest attention to every small detail.<sup>2</sup>

This attention to detail consists of following specific rules (called *rubrics*) – not merely for the sake of rules, but because of *why* they exist: to ensure a decorous and proper rendering of Holy Mother Church’s sacred rites for the worship of God.



Every server knows that the celebrant has to follow certain rules when celebrating Mass, from where he stands at the altar for the various prayers, to how he must hold his hands at different times. Or even that the priest must keep his thumbs and index fingers joined after the Consecration until they are purified at the Ablutions.

This strict attention to detail is actually a form of spiritual discipline for the celebrant, thus a means for the priest’s personal sanctification – conformity to these rules also edifies the faithful (and hopefully the attentive servers too!) thus increasing their devotion in the sacred mysteries. The servers also have a set of rules they must adhere to, the most basic being they should perform all of their actions *at a moderate pace*.

The phrase “at a moderate pace” actually has many applications, but in general it means to act deliberately and solemnly, but in a natural manner – thus neither lazily, nor in an unnatural stiff and militaristic way, or even with a fake pietistic air. In fact,

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2 Cardinal Bernard Griffin's Preface on p. i.

the latter is actually a form of pride, but the moderate pace exemplifies modesty and humility and helps to remind us of our unworthiness to partake in the immense privilege of serving the sacred liturgy. This is because when one acts at a moderate pace, one neither goes too fast, nor too slow – which sometimes is contrary to our own habit, or will.

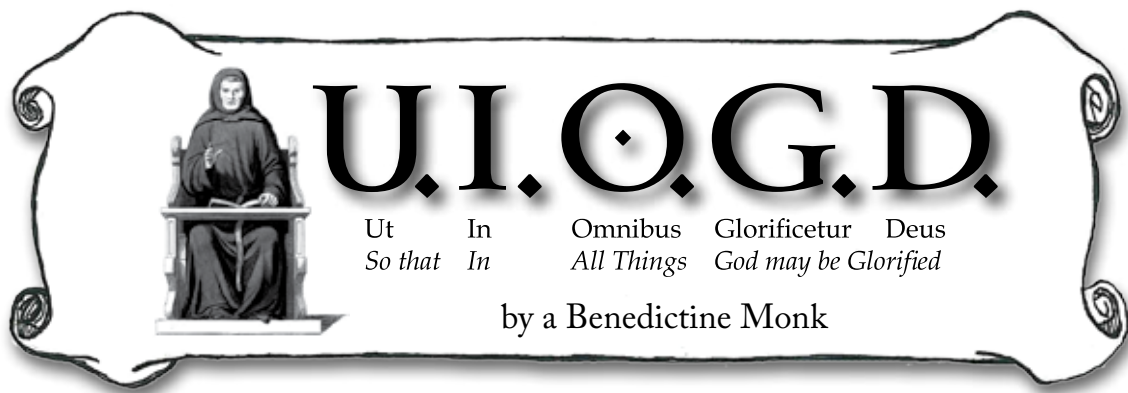
Hence, learning to conform all of one's actions to a moderate pace involves not only being attentive but also working on one's faults – that is, to perfect oneself as Christ Himself. Everyone has different weaknesses, so some servers may need to work on how fast they walk or turn, others in making the Latin responses as prayers, or even the sign of the cross with faith instead of absent-mindedly like swatting flies!

Concerning the importance of acting at a moderate pace the Guild's handbook states at the beginning of the "General Directions" section:

All actions should be done deliberately, thoroughly and without hurry, but not slowly. All the words should be spoken audibly, each syllable articulated, every sentence reverently pronounced.<sup>3</sup>

In adhering to this admonition, one's natural actions are elevated to sanctifying ones, thus becoming a small prayer in itself. This results not only in a beautiful fulfillment of our duty in the liturgical act of religion (which we owe to God in justice), but also in the individual sanctification of the altar server – the first part of the Guild's three-fold Object.

So when you respond "*Introibo ad altare Dei*," remember to go forth moderately in all you do when serving the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. ✠



## Ad Quid Venisti?

Why have you come here?

What is your reason for coming here?

For what purpose have you come?

These words which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, addressed to His friend and apostle Judas when he came to betray Him to His enemies by a kiss the night before his Passion and death were, for the great Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, his daily bread.

Every day, when he awoke to the monastery bell calling him to rise to a fresh battle within the arena of the monastic cloister, he would ask himself: “Bernard, for what have you come?” He heard His Lord and Master ask him: “Are you here to betray Me, to carry the banner of My enemy, to fight under his standard, or will you stand with me by your fidelity to monastic discipline and drink My chalice unto the utter defeat of My adversary? Who will you serve? For which City will you fight? For that built upon self-love and selfishness unto the contempt of Me your God, or for that built upon the love of Me, your Sole Purpose, for Whom alone I have created you, unto the contempt of self, unto selflessness?” Every soul that has existed, does exist, or will exist necessarily belongs to one of these two opposing sides.

Saint Bernard did not want to be said of him what was said of Judas: “It is better that he had not been born.” Indeed, it is simply better for that man not to be born, who does not fulfill the sole purpose for which he has been made, God’s glory; in the same way that

one can say of a knife that doesn't cut, that it would have been better if it were not made, that making such a knife was a waste of time since it does not achieve its purpose.

And yet Judas in the blindness born from his selfishness did not accuse himself for wasting his life, but he rather accused the holy penitent Magdalen, the image of the contemplative soul, for “wasting” the precious ointment that she poured upon our Lord: “Ad quid perditio hæc?” “Why this waste?” he asked with indignation. Clearly Judas, as it is for every such person, lost his soul by his selfishness whereas Magdalen saved her soul by her selflessness so well expressed by this her sacrifice of the precious ointment. And by this we see that selflessness is founded on and flowers forth into sacrifice.

To sacrifice is to perform an act by which one simply acknowledges that God is the “one thing necessary” as Saint Mary Magdalen learned in her contemplation at the feet of our Lord and which she put into practice in “wasting” the ointment of great price. When a sacrifice is made man takes something of his own, something which is for him, ordained to him, and he destroys it in order to show that he is not the final purpose of it, that in the end all things



are for One alone, serve one Purpose – God. We find a very concrete example of this in the Old Testament where we see the chosen people taking the best from their flocks in order

to offer sacrifice to God. The animal represents the life of man for it sustains his life when eaten and yet man denies himself this nourishment by destroying it. He therefore “wastes” it in the sense that he has made it useless for himself.



Our Lord has taught us that he who saves his life will lose it and he who loses his life *for His sake* will find it. This “losing of one’s life” is the basis of sacrifice. It means that one ceases to live for himself. His actions are no longer selfish, self-centered, ordained ultimately for himself but selfless and ordained to the One worthy of all our being, the only One in fact for whom we exist. That one who strives to destroy within himself his inordinate self-love truly has the spirit of sacrifice. Simply put, this is fulfilled by a life of service.

Teaching us by these His words our Lord has taught us also by His actions when, as Saint Paul says, “having joy set before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame, and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God.” Saint Paul teaches us the ultimate reason why our Lord sacrificed Himself when he tells us that Christ is the Glory, the Splendor of the Father. As the Son of God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, He is the perfect Image of his Father, perfectly expressing His Father’s perfections. His one concern therefore is that His Father be glorified, that His infinite excellence be known and loved. He expresses this reality when he tells us: “I live for the Father.” Christ’s total focus was upon restoring the honor due to His Father and denied to Him by the sin, the selfishness, of man. He told His apostles that he was going to lay down His life on the Cross so that as He said, “the world may know that I love the Father.” Our Lord lost His life *for the sake of* His Father and He invites us, commands us, to lose our life for His sake. “You are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”

The restoration of the glory of God happens within that creature which He made in

His image and likeness – man. The Father has sent His own Glory, His Son, to bring this about. By turning away from sin, seeking to destroy it by the power of Christ, by uniting ourselves to our Lord, learning His teaching and following His example of sacrifice, we become like to Him and therefore we take on within us the very likeness of Him who is the Father's glory. "And Christ died for all; that they also who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again."

Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost and offered Himself by the Holy Ghost. So we are made into Christ's likeness and sacrifice ourselves for God's glory by the Holy Ghost. This is the foundation of the life of prayer to which we are called, by which we become true adorers in spirit and in truth, in which we must endeavor ever more to be animated and moved by the Holy Ghost within us. As Saint Gemma, "the poor Gemma" as she gloried in calling herself, said: "It is a question of uniting extremes. God, who is everything, and the creature, who is nothing." Glory be *to* the Father *in* the Son *through* the Holy Ghost.

This is the meaning of our service of God. To serve is to make someone else our purpose. At the altar, during the renewal of our Lord's sacrifice, we find the greatest opportunity to realize this our fundamental vocation as creatures and as sons of God that is the giving of all our mind, heart and soul, "our precious ointment", to the service of God's glory. This is the greatest thing we can do. "Thou shalt serve God alone," to be ruled by whom as by our sole purpose, is to reign.

This is our answer to that question we should ask ourselves everyday and whenever we approach the altar in order to serve God: "For what have you come?" ✠

UIOGD



# LEGENDA FABULAE



## A Heroic Sacrifice

Illustrated by Gregory Matulka

It was a little before the First World War, in 1914, when on an autumn evening at St-Leger, in the diocese of Namer, Belgium, some children passed along the street, led by a priest still young and full of life.

"There goes the boys club walking with Father", say the good men from the village. "How lucky we are to have such a kind vicar as he! When our children are with him, at least there is no need to worry, while before-hand they returned home every Thursday full of bruises, clothing torn... and then we can be sure that with him they will not go prowling in the neighbors' yards! How much trouble these stories of stolen plums and cherries make!"

But when the little troupe passed the cafe on the corner, there was heard a slightly different story.

"Behold the new Pastor who is enrolling the brats now," sneered a certain Robert X, the most rabid priest-hater in the area.

"He's idiotic," he added, "to allow the skulls of these kids to be stuffed by these "cassocks". Myself, I don't understand their parents!"

And when the priest passed by the door, the man would yell, "When one is good for nothing in life, he becomes a priest! They're all sluggards as well as the police and custom officers, and they always have bread to waste!"

The last words of this hateful sentence were lost in the noise of the children's steps, but the young vicar had heard sufficiently to judge who it was speaking, and he philosophically concluded: "Still another hard one who will not be easily had!"

There came a summer evening in 1944, in this same Belgian village. The



Germans had arrived the day before. Under pretext that they had been shot at from a window, they had seized 15 men as hostages: 15 fathers of families. They would be shot the following day. Among the designated victims was found the famous Robert X, priest-hater. In spite of the enemy's arrival, the priest had remained at his post, increasing his work to help the unfortunate. When he learned that 15 fathers of families had been condemned to death, he rose up, and without hesitation, went to the German Commandant. There, he asked an officer why innocent men had been condemned and why it was impossible to obtain the prisoners freedom. The officer listened with a mocking air, then, when the vicar had finished, he coldly retorted: "Father, they *will* be shot!"

"You can't do this," insisted the priest. They are fathers of families and still have young children! Who will take care of them later?"

"I have no idea," the officer said dryly. "I make war".

“And if I offer to take their place, will you release them?” said the young priest.

“You are only one man, Father ... and I need 15!”

“Will you free at least one if I take his place?”

“Yes ... but you will not find them”.

“Will you permit me to choose the one who will live”?

“Agreed”!

“Can I ask one more favor”?

“Which is?”

“That of going to say goodbye to the children of my club. It is Thursday; they must be waiting for me.”

“Go, but be quick about it, because we are not waiting for tomorrow to shoot the hostages.”

The priest went immediately to the rendezvous for his boys. Around 50 boys, from 8 - 16 years old were waiting. “Children, he said, I have come to tell you good-bye. The Germans have accepted me as a hostage in place of one of the 15 prisoners. I wanted to save them all, but the officer wants to shoot 15 persons. Several of the victims are your dads. This evening you must console your mamas who will be crying. Pray also a little bit for me! Remember what I have taught you here: Love each other as true brothers and always be courageous Catholics. Good-bye, until heaven!”

While the little ones burst into tears, the priest headed to the church for a last prayer there. When he left, 14 of the oldest boys waited in the yard.

"Father, said one of them, we're going with you. Like this, there will be 15!"

“You, boys! But, what about your mothers?”

“We drew straws for who would go with you, but only from among those of us who have brothers. Those who remain will console them.”

“But, children, it isn't possible... it's crazy!”

“Father, we have decided. We're going with you. We'll see if the Germans refuse.”



And the vicar left, surrounded by his 14 volunteers... The little group crossed the village where a heavy, threatening silence reigned. Seeing these big boys, in line and walking firmly, many believed that they were going as usual for a walk. In reality they were going to their deaths!

Indeed, the German officer accepted their proposition. He had been ordered to shoot 15 hostages; the number was there and this sufficed. Without mentioning the heroic gesture, he freed the 15 fathers of families who, believing it to be an act of generosity on the Conquerors part, and very happy, hurried home. But when, crazy with joy, they arrived, they learned the terrible news: the vicar and 14 of his boys had taken their place! Several groaned with sorrow learning that their own sons had replaced them... but what to do? The enemy was without mercy, and they wanted blood! Soon, indeed, the young condemned were lined up against the wall. The execution squad was before them, arms down. A soldier bandaged the eyes of the priest and children. The German sergeant cried in a rough voice: " Ready! Fire!..." The victims fell one by one as they were shot. Only one hostage at a time was shot at, so as to be sure of his death. The long black cassock of the priest was now stretched on the grass, very near the bodies of three of his children. Suddenly a Bavarian major appeared. He had received a delegation from the fathers of the families. The sacrifice of their children had moved him, and he came to order that the execution be suspended on the field! Alas, the first four volleys had already accomplished their work of death... The blood of the priest and his three young companions had paid the heavy ransom for the 15 heads of families!

The evening of this same day, a man was seen entering the church, he sat for a long time, weeping... It was Robert X. He had learned of the sublime gesture of the vicar. He came, humbly, to ask God's pardon for having had so much hatred for someone, who from the bottom of his heart, had loved him so much! ✠

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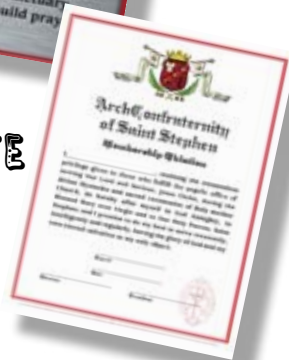
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# SAINT STEPHEN'S STOREHOUSE

Item and Description	Item #	Cost
<b>Medals and Cords</b> <i>(see note on starred items)</i>		
<b>President's medal*</b> <i>(black), medal only</i>	<b>M-PR</b>	<b>6.25</b>
<b>Master of Ceremonies medal*</b> <i>(gold), medal only</i>	<b>M-MC</b>	<b>6.25</b>
<b>Junior/ Senior Acolyte medal*</b> <i>(silver), medal only</i>	<b>M-AC</b>	<b>6.25</b>
<b>Tasselled cord with bead</b> <i>(for President, MC and Senior Ac.)</i>	<b>C-AC</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>Junior Acolyte cord</b>	<b>C-JA</b>	<b>6.25</b>
<b>Junior Acolyte ribbon</b>	<b>R-JA</b>	<b>1.25</b>
<b>Medal and Cord Sets</b> <i>(pre-assembled)</i>		
<b>President's cord and medal*</b>	<b>SET-P</b>	<b>21.25</b>
<b>Master of Ceremonies' cord and medal*</b>	<b>SET-MC</b>	<b>21.25</b>
<b>Senior Acolyte's cord and medal*</b>	<b>SET-SA</b>	<b>21.25</b>
<b>Junior Acolyte's cord and medal*</b>	<b>SET-JA</b>	<b>12.50</b>
<b>Junior Acolyte's ribbon and medal*</b>	<b>SET-JAR</b>	<b>7.50</b>
<b>ACSS Servers' Prayer Cards</b>		
<b>Daily Prayer card</b> <i>(cardstock)</i>	<b>DP-C</b>	<b>31.</b>
<b>Daily Prayer card</b> <i>(laminated)</i>	<b>DP-L</b>	<b>63.</b>
<b>Before and After Mass</b> <i>(cardstock)</i>	<b>BAM-C</b>	<b>1.88</b>
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...continued on next page...



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Item and Description		Item #	Cost
<b>Liturgical Supplies</b>			
<b>Prayers after Mass card</b> ( <i>Leonine Prayers - laminated, Latin &amp; English</i> )		<b>LEO</b>	<b>3.75</b>
<b>Vesting Prayers for the Priest</b> ( <i>cardstock; Standard size: 6 7/8 x 9 7/8</i> )		<b>VPP-F</b>	<b>1.88</b>
<b>Laminated</b>		<b>VPP-FL</b>	<b>3.75</b>
<b>Vesting Prayers for the Priest</b> ( <i>cardstock; Skinny size: 3 7/8 x 9 7/16</i> )		<b>VPP-S</b>	<b>1.88</b>
<b>Laminated</b>		<b>VPP-SL</b>	<b>3.75</b>
<b>ACSS Guild Uniforms</b>			
<b>T-Shirts</b>			
<b>Extra Small</b> ( <i>says large on the tag</i> )		<b>SH-XS</b>	<b>25.00</b>
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<b>Medium</b>		<b>SH-M</b>	<b>25.00</b>
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<b>President's pin</b> ( <i>black &amp; gold</i> )		<b>PIN-PR</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>MC pin</b> ( <i>black &amp; red &amp; gold</i> )		<b>PIN-MC</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Senior Acolyte pin</b> ( <i>gray &amp; red &amp; silver</i> )		<b>PIN-SA</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Junior Acolyte pin</b> ( <i>gray &amp; silver</i> )		<b>PIN-JA</b>	<b>4.38</b>

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- ✦ **Saint Stephen's Storehouse** (*the ACSS Digital Catalog*)
- ✦ **Explanation of the ACSS** (*short summary of who and why*)
- ✦ **Acolyte Handbook**
- ✦ **Acolyte Magazines**
- ✦ **Introduction to the Guild** (*Q & A for the Parish Priest*)
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